



COLORADO

Department of Agriculture

Community Food Access Program

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History

- Loss of grocers in low income rural and urban areas
- Lack of affordable distribution and storage of fresh and local foods
- **Nourish Colorado** - advocacy organization, implements numerous healthy food programs statewide
 - Identified the need, developed the idea
 - 7 years in the making
 - Pilot programs, micro grants
 - Worked with Representatives to develop bill language
- **American Rescue Plan Act** funds offered opportunity to start this program

HB22-1380 Community Food Access Program

“Improve access to and lower prices for healthy foods in low-income and underserved areas of the state by supporting small food retailers”

- Program components:
 - Small Food Business Recovery and Resilience **Grant** Program: \$50K grants to small food retailers and small family farms for operating costs, equipment purchases, accounting support, and POS systems
 - **Outreach and Technical Assistance**
 - Community Food **Consortium**: value chain coordination and distribution subsidies

HB23-1008 Tax Credit

- Continued Community Food Access program
 - No additional funds for grant
 - 75% tax credit for:
 - Equipment
 - Delivery fees
- \$10M available per year for tax credits
- Program ends Jan 1, 2031



Tax Credit

Non-competitive process

Total credits issued: \$2.27 M to 80 businesses

Average award size: \$24k

Counties with an awardee: 28

Most frequently purchased equipment: cold storage

Increase in annual sales: \$2.5 M



Community Food Consortium

Quarterly Meetings

Newsletter

Food Hub Benefits

Tax credits for fees incurred on
delivery of healthy foods

Connection to each other:

- Sales of equipment
- Advice on SNAP issues, equipment installation
- Group ordering to meet minimums
- Farmers can meet needs

Grant

Closed 2024

Total issued: \$5M in 116 grants

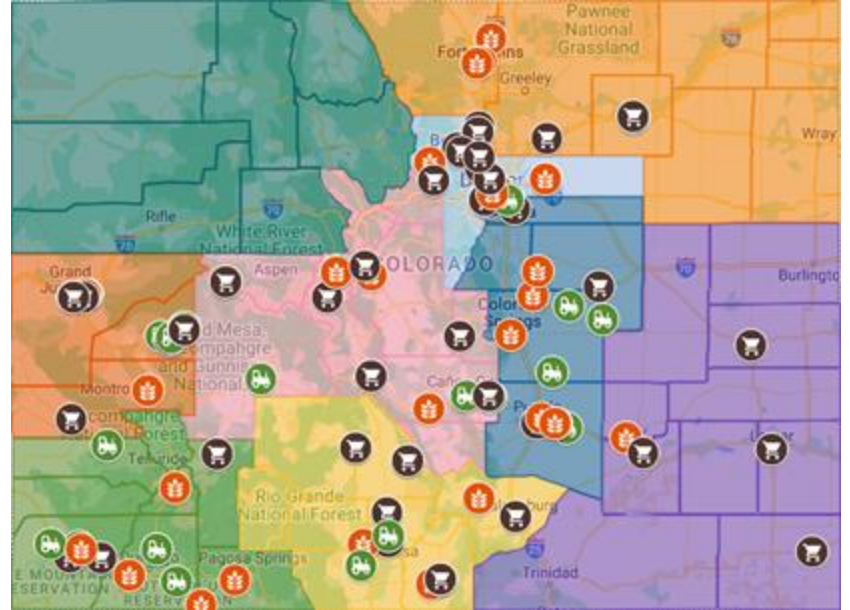
Average award size: \$42k

Counties with an awardee: 42 (of 60)

Rural awardees: 58%

BIPOC led businesses: 45%

Most frequently requested expense: cold storage



Outreach and Technical Assistance (OTA)

7 contractors throughout the state

Identify eligible businesses, support them in applying

Lean on existing relationships and knowledge of the regional food access landscape

Monthly meetings with CDA



Rocky Ford carniceria will establish a “produce shed.”





Only grocery store in rural town on the Eastern Plains expanded their cold storage space to be able to purchase more products, receive deliveries, and lower prices.

Front Range carniceria purchased new walk in to be able to store more products, offer more variety, and lower prices.



Only grocery store in isolated mountain town upgraded refrigeration to reduce spoilage.



Manzanola farm purchased truck and trailer to be able to sell products a various locations in their low income, low access community.



Grocery store on the west end of Montrose County purchased a produce case to display more fresh products.



San Luis Valley store changed ownership, and all equipment that was part of the purchase was eligible for a tax credit.



Farmstand with a CSA that serves 65% SNAP customers doubled production with a new tractor.



Challenges

Grant: Tight timeline, matching federal compliance with legislative language

Tax credit: making the purchase before receiving the credit. DOR and tax filing.

Consortium: busy business owners making time!

OTA: not every region has an org poised to do this work. Two regions in the state without OTA support

In general: Many gray areas and complexities

- “Low Income, Low Access” not so straightforward
- Farm applicants have to build a strong case

Program Design Workshops and Advisory Committee

New kind of program for CDA

Workshops: attended by 166 stakeholders

Takeaways:

- Small food retailers and small farmers need a simple, straightforward application.
- Grant requirements need to be transparent and well communicated.
- Outreach efforts must leverage trusted relationships already present in low income, low access communities.

Questions?

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