



NUag News Blast

Spring Edition

The NUag team is back with our Spring newsletter! Get the most updated information about our project as we work with producers, cooperators, and the USDA to advance urban agriculture.

Website Updates: NUag Impact Snapshots

The NUag Project team has rolled out our version of impact statements based on interviews conducted at the National Urban Agriculture Conference, held in Detroit.

Our third and fourth snapshot amplify perspectives on *Technical Assistance and Training*, and *Community Building and Youth Engagement* focusing on relevance, response, and results.

[Technical Assistance & Training Snapshot \(PDF\)](#)

[Community Building & Youth Engagement \(PDF\)](#)



**Mini Grant Updates:
Project Highlights**



Bidii Baby Foods

Shiprock, New Mexico

Bidii Baby Foods, LLC is a small family farm and agricultural cooperative incorporated operating on the Navajo Nation. They've created an Indigenous baby food line developed by farmers and new parents to increase access to traditional foods in early childhood. They passionately believe that food is medicine, and that breastmilk and ancestral foods are the best source of nutrition for young children and future generations.



Their mission is to reconnect Indigenous families with the longstanding relationship between earth and parenting and is using mini grant funding from NUag cooperator [Farm to Table New Mexico](#) to strengthen their [Farmer-in-REZidence](#) incubator program. The program is for beginner, young (<35) Indigenous farmers providing ongoing technical support and training to build capacity to participants and maintain Indigenous/regenerative farming practices to improve soil health.



When asked how the funding has impacted their operation, farm owner Zach responded, "The NM Farm to Table mini-grant directly strengthened our Farmer-in-REZidence program by supporting land-based training, seeds, and on-farm supplies that allowed emerging Indigenous farmers to increase production of culturally significant crops. The investment helped us expand hands-on agricultural education while strengthening local food sovereignty and building the next generation of growers in our community. "



[Read More Here](#)



Gathings Gardens

Bloomfield, New Mexico

The mission of Gathings Gardens is to provide organic produce to local families using a holistic traditional farming approach. Their farming practices include using solar power, conserving water, and utilizing regenerative agriculture practices. Their operation teaches these agriculture techniques to future farmers through vocational courses and intern opportunities.



Gathings Gardens was also a recipient of mini grant funding from our NUag cooperator [Farm to Table New Mexico](#) for a project titled "Farming in a Food Desert." These funds supported the expansion of Gathings Gardens greenhouse system and allowed them to extend the growing season from 5 months to 11 months.



Co-owners Jeremy Gathings stated "The micro-grant offered through Farm to Table was instrumental in the purchase and install of our first high tunnel. This one addition has drastically improved our operation, providing season extension and seed starting capacity that wouldn't have been possible without the help from everyone at Farm to Table!"

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SERVE Food Pantry

Stafford, Virginia

SERVE (Serving Children & Families since 1979) has a mission to strategically address food insecurity, provide emergency relief, and promote self-reliance programs that give hope to people in the community.

SERVE is currently partnering with Mary Washington Healthcare to host a Mobile Produce Pantry with the aim of supplying free produce to food insecure neighbors in order to combat the social detriments of health due to limited access to healthy food.



Currently, the Mobile Produce Pantry operates two Thursdays each month.

As a mini grant funding recipient from our NUag cooperators [Virginia Tech CFSCT](#) and [Virginia State SFOP](#), SERVE aims to provide nutritious foods to low-income individuals and families through state and local agencies, including food banks and pantries, to supplement their diets at no cost with urban growing.

Executive Director Lee Cheney commented "The program is hosted by SERVE Food Pantry, in partnership with Central Virginia Health Services and nearly a dozen local minority Virginia farmers. The program provides confidential wellness checks for our neighbors in need and aligns them with the nutritional education and fresh food items to promote healthy eating, especially if they are managing an existing or underlying medical condition where a healthy diet benefits them. We provide dignity one meal at a time, promoting the benefits of adding more fresh produce, dairy and healthy grains to their daily meals. Our program is a win-win for creating an opportunity for our minority farmers building generational wealth and our underserved communities living healthier lives."

[Read More Here](#)



New Roots International Rescue Committee

Charlottesville, Virginia

Each year, the International Rescue Committee in Charlottesville resettles refugees, helping them to achieve economic self-sufficiency, a sense of security and social integration. Through the New Roots program, refugees are able to share their heritage and build healthy lives in Charlottesville.

New Roots IRC offers land access, trainings, local markets and more. With mini grant funding from NUag cooperators [Virginia Tech CFSCT](#) and [Virginia State SFOP](#), they will invest in infrastructure improvements at New Roots Farm to enhance operational efficiency, improve farmer quality of life, and benefit household food security.

When asked about the operation, program manager Cecilia responded "Members of the IRC's New Roots Farm gathered for a series of farmer-to-farmer skill shares covering topics such as soil health, water quality, plant propagation, and seed saving. The IRC used project funding to support these workshops and to invest in improvements to the farm's irrigation system."

[Read More Here](#)



Urban Insights

[Empowering Urban Farmers: A Policy Proposal for Sustainable Agriculture - Pasa Sustainable Agriculture](#)

[Indoor Starter Plants From Seed - Instructables](#)

[Starting Seeds on Your Urban Farm](#)

[The Ultimate List of Trusted Seed Companies Recommended by Real Gardeners](#)

[Soils for Urban Farms, Gardens and Green Spaces - SARE](#)

[Low Tunnels for Beginners | Extension | West Virginia University](#)

[Habitat Assessment Guide for Pollinators in Yards, Gardens, and Parks](#)

[Vegetable Container Gardening for Beginners | The Old Farmer's Almanac](#)

[How to Build a RAISED BED in a TOTE - Container Gardening](#)

[32 Raised Garden Bed Design Ideas](#)

[Oyster Towers – recycling your grow blocks – Everything Mushrooms](#)

[About Seed Bombs](#)



Relevant Updates

[Notice of Request for New Information Collection; Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production \(UAIP\) Grants](#) - This notice invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on this proposed information collection. This collection is a revision of a currently approved collection for reporting progress on an Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grant.

[Secretary Rollins Announces \\$263 Million Food Purchase to Support U.S. Producers and Strengthen America's Food Supply | USDA](#) -U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) intent to purchase up to \$263 million in dairy and agricultural products from American farmers and producers to distribute to food banks and nutrition assistance programs across the country. These purchases are being made through USDA's authority under Section 32 of the Agriculture Act of 1935 and will assist producers and communities in need.

[USDA Announces Assistance for Specialty Crop Farmers Impacted by Unfair Market Disruptions | USDA](#) - These one-time bridge payments will help address market disruptions, elevated input costs, persistent inflation, and market losses from foreign competitors engaging in unfair trade practices that impede exports.

[USDA | SCORE](#) - SCORE is proud to partner with USDA to provide business mentorship to help farmers and ranchers succeed. Learn more and find your mentor.

[Farm Bill | House Agriculture Committee](#) - The Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026 - About the farm bill with farm bill resources.

[House Agriculture Leadership Releases First Draft of 2026 Farm Bill](#)

Stay Informed

Sign up at the bottom of the USDA Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production page for updates

[OUAIP Homepage](#)

Stay up to date on current FSA news and programs

[FSA News](#)

Keep in contact with your local Urban Agriculture Service Center, FSA office and NCRS office

[Local service Center Locator](#)



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