

## USDA SECRETARY VILSACK ANNOUNCES FEDERAL FUNDING TO ASSIST PROGRAMS FOCUSING ON UNDERSERVED PRODUCERS



By: [Richard M Blau](#), Chair  
Nationwide Food law Department

The American Rescue Plan, passed by Congress and signed into law by President Joe Biden in 2021, provides federal funding to counter the current pandemic and deliver immediate and direct relief to families and workers impacted by the COVID crisis through no fault of their own. Under Section 1006 of the new law, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) received substantial funding to help underserved farmers, ranchers, and foresters secure the education, tools and support they need to succeed in agriculture.

Last week, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that USDA will provide approximately \$75 million in American Rescue Plan funding to 20 organizations that have demonstrated their ability to provide technical assistance connecting underserved producers with USDA programs and services. The 20 organizations, listed below with their online addresses, were selected for their proven track records working with underserved producer communities, such as veterans, beginning farmers, indigenous and minority ag groups, limited resource producers, and producers living in high-poverty areas. These organizations will use the additional federal funding to expand their work with underserved producer communities on business and tax planning, financial assistance planning, market planning, farmer advocacy, and business curriculum development.

### List of USDA Funded Cooperative Agreement Organizations

1. Federation of Southern Cooperatives: <https://www.federation.coop/>
2. Intertribal Agriculture Council: <https://www.indianag.org/learn>
3. National Black Farmers Association: <https://www.nationalblackfarmersassociation.org/>
4. The Socially Disadvantaged Farmer and Rancher Policy Center at Alcorn State University: <https://sites.alcorn.edu/socially-disadvantaged-farmers/>
5. Indian Land Tenure Foundation: <https://iltf.org/>
6. Land Loss Prevention Project: <https://www.landloss.org/>
7. Rural Coalition: <https://www.ruralco.org/>

8. Center for Farm Financial Management: <https://www.cffm.umn.edu/>
9. Hmong American Farmers Association: <https://www.hmongfarmers.com/>
10. Farmer Veteran Coalition: <https://farmvetco.org/>
11. The Kohala Center: <https://kohalacenter.org/>
12. Alaska Village Initiatives: <https://akvillage.org/>
13. Farmers Legal Action Group: <http://www.flaginc.org/>
14. National Young Farmers Coalition: <https://www.youngfarmers.org/>
15. National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association: <https://www.nlfrta.org/>
16. The Center for Heirs Property Preservation: <https://www.heirsproperty.org/>
17. National Immigrant Farmer Initiative: <https://www.nationalimmigrantfarminginitiativeinc.org/>
18. National Cooperative Business Association: <https://ncbaclusa.coop/>
19. National Black Growers Council: <https://nationalblackgrowerscouncil.com/>
20. World Farmers, Inc. <https://www.worldfarmers.org/>

USDA announced that this initial funding is just the first step in deploying American Rescue Plan resources in response to demands for more immediate assistance to help underserved producers succeed. Section 1006 of the new legislation provides direction and over \$1 billion in funding for USDA to support programs that assist in a wide range of remedial areas, including:

- On-farm business planning;
- market development and access assistance;
- tax planning;
- climate smart food and forestry practices;
- land access and credit access assistance;
- access to markets and market development.

This announcement is the latest in a series of announcements building momentum around USDA's historic commitment to center equity in decision-making and policymaking and lower barriers to access USDA programming.

The list of 20 is an impressive group of dedicated non-profit organizations. Each is uniquely focused on strengthening American agriculture, reflecting a spirit and determination to support our nation's farmers, ranchers and foresters.

To learn more about any of these organizations, or how American Rescue Funding can help specific ag-operations, please contact GrayRobinson's Nationwide Food Law Department. Reach us by telephone at (866) 382-5132 or via e-mail at [foodlaw@gray-robinson.com](mailto:foodlaw@gray-robinson.com).



[Richard M. Blau](#) leads GrayRobinson's [Nationwide Food Law Department](#), focusing on the laws that govern the production, importation, processing, marketing, distribution, and sale of foods and beverages throughout the United States. Richard works with all levels of the food industry, having represented international importers and domestic manufacturers, statewide wholesaler trade groups and regional distributors, and retailers (including multistate restaurant and grocery store chains) across the United States. Richard has achieved numerous peer-related accolades for his legal work, including Chambers and Partners - Nationally ranked as "Band 1" for Food and Beverage Law; Best Lawyers in America - Nationally listed for Food and Beverage Law; and Super Lawyers - Elected member.