

FIS 22 405

**New Hampshire**  
 Department of Agriculture,  
 Markets & Food

Shawn N. Jasper, Commissioner

October 27, 2022

The Honorable Karen Umberger, Chairman  
 Fiscal Committee of the General Court and

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu  
 and the Honorable Council  
 State House  
 Concord, New Hampshire 03301

**REQUESTED ACTION**

Pursuant to RSA 14:30-a, VI, the Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food, requests authorization to accept and expend funds in the amount of \$1,023,523 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) for the NH Meat Processing Infrastructure and Training Investment Program, effective upon Fiscal Committee and Governor and Council approval through June 30, 2023. This is an allowable use of ARPA SFRF funds under Section 602 (c) (1) (A) to respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts.  
**100% Federal Funds.**

Funds are to be budgeted in FY2023 in the following account:

| 02-018-018-180010-NEWXXXXXX, ARPA<br>Meat Processing and Training <sup>1</sup> |                                    | FY 2023                    | FY 2023            | FY 2023            |
|--|------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| CLASS  | DESCRIPTION                        | Current<br>Modified Budget | BUDGET<br>REQUEST  | Revised Budget     |
| 040 - 501587   | Indirect Cost                      | \$0                        | \$12,499           | \$12,499           |
| 041 - 500801   | Audit Fund Set Aside               | \$0                        | \$1,024            | \$1,024            |
| 072 - 502627   | Grant - Federal -<br>Discretionary | \$0                        | \$750,000          | \$750,000          |
| 103 - 502664   | Contracts for Op<br>Services       | \$0                        | \$260,000          | \$260,000          |
| <b>Total Expense</b>   |                                    |                            | <b>\$1,023,523</b> | <b>\$1,023,523</b> |
| 000-400338-16  | Federal Funds                      | \$0                        | \$1,023,523        | \$1,023,523        |
| <b>Total Funding</b>   |                                    |                            | <b>\$1,023,523</b> | <b>\$1,023,523</b> |

<sup>1</sup> All direct program costs will be accounted for using activity 00FRF602PH1801A and all administrative and indirect costs will be accounted for using activity 00FRF602PH1801Z. Accounting classifications may be subject to technical changes at the discretion of the Department of Administrative Services' Division of Accounting Services.

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## EXPLANATION

**Certificate in Meat Processing and Food Safety - \$260,000** is requested to address workforce needs in local food production. Meat processing professionals are critical team members in the supply chain that moves agricultural animal assets from the farm to the table. However, recent ongoing workforce challenges have led to significant staffing shortages in New Hampshire's meat and poultry processing facilities. The State does not currently have any meat cutting training, certificate-level or above, and stakeholders have agreed that such a program is important for the sustainability of the industry.

The proposed Meat Processing and Food Safety program consists of a blend of hands-on in-person and online training programs to train and educate the local workforce as well as support the region's agriculture industry. This program will be administered by UNH Cooperative Extension and the UNH Professional Development and Training organization. To expand awareness of career opportunities within the meat processing industry and to increase the inclusivity and scope of training opportunities, a Mobile Meat Processing Laboratory is proposed. The mobile lab would allow for the program to travel through the region to high schools, vocational centers, and industry partners to conduct career orientations and hands-on training programs.

**Meat Processing Infrastructure Grants - \$750,000** is requested to address the severe capacity limitations facing small and midsize livestock producers and ensure they have places to process their products and remain in business. Labor shortages and limited availability of USDA certified processing facilities have impacted production of local meat, despite growing demand. During COVID, many small and midsize meat producers were completely locked out of the processing schedule starting in early 2020 with waiting lists now averaging 18 to 24 months or more.

Equipment and infrastructure upgrades for NH meat processing facilities, farms, and businesses that provide slaughter, processing, and custom butchering services, provided through a grant program administered by the Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food, could alleviate these impacts and create new options for processing. The grant program would feature a match component, whereby applicants will contribute 15% of the requested funds and ARPA SFRF will provide 85%. The maximum amount that can be awarded in any one application will be \$200,000. Examples of eligible equipment can include items such as convection ovens, skinners, smokehouse, coolers, or mobile processing units designed for either poultry or beef.

Funds are budgeted as follows:

Class 040 – Indirect Costs – to recover central services

Class 041 – Audit Fund Set-Aside - .001 of federal funds payable to DAS for audit fees per RSA124:16

Class 072 – Grants - Federal – Discretionary – for disbursing out Federal Funds to assist the meat processing industry and related workforce as described in the explanation

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Class 103 – Contracts for Operational Services – for the purpose of developing training programs  
for the local workforce as well as support the regions' agricultural industry

In the event that Federal Funds are no longer available, General Funds will not be requested to  
support this program.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shawn N. Jasper". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Shawn" and last name "Jasper" clearly distinguishable.

Shawn N. Jasper  
Commissioner