Wifi Password: jimhogg1913

Remote Check-In: 111225

Vendor Outreach
Keeping it Local

Prepared By:
Roberto Meave
Lead-Local Foods Procurement

Finance and Purchasing Operations
Division of Business Operations & School Finance Support

November 12, 2025

Presentation Agenda

- **Welcome:** Upcoming Beef Products RFP, Bonfire eBuyOne - Robert Meave, Region One
- **Grants & Resources for Local Agriculture** - Sara Saenz, Program Coordinator, Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Advancement, UTRGV
- **FRESH TRAYS - A Path for Farm to School Success** - Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension - Ashley Gregory and Jennifer Herrera, Local County Extension Agents
- **Region One ESC- Migrant Education Program** - Faviola Camacho
- **Verdant Exchange** - Hernan Colmenero, Founder and Board President
- **Conclusion** - Q&A, closing remarks, announcements

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South Texas Cooperative

Region One ESC

1900 W. Schunior
Edinburg, Texas 78541

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OVERVIEW

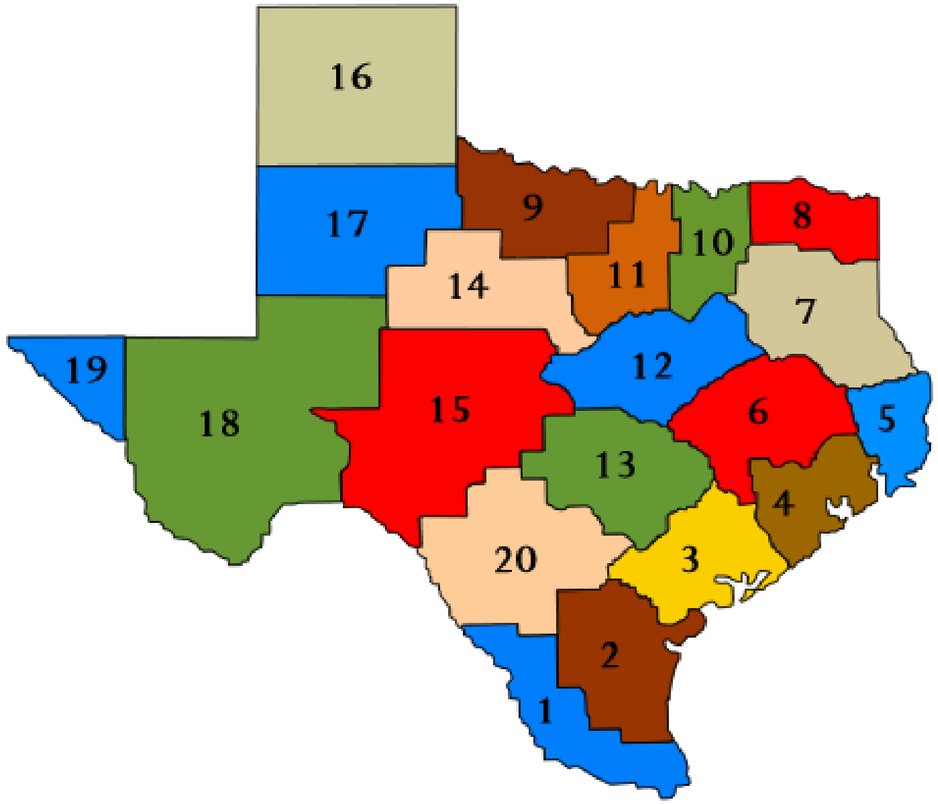
Education Service Centers (ESCs)

Established: 1965 by the 59th Texas Legislature to assist school districts

Statewide Network: 20 Education Service Centers

Primary Objectives (Texas Education Code §8.002):

- Assist school districts in improving student performance
- Help school districts operate efficiently and economically
- Support the implementation of mandates from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas Legislature



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REGION ONE ESC

- Service area:
  - 7 counties:
    - Cameron County
    - Hidalgo County
    - Jim Hogg County
    - Starr County
    - Webb County
    - Willacy County
    - Zapata County
  - 37 school districts and 7 charter school systems
  - 433,964 students

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OBJECTIVE



Assist school districts to operate efficiently and economically

Accomplished through Region One ESC purchasing cooperative

- Region One Purchasing Cooperative
- Child Nutrition Program-South Texas Cooperative
- Library Services and Instructional Resources Cooperative
- Texas Energy Center

Districts may participate in any or all the Region One ESC purchasing cooperatives provided

Districts may also participate in other purchasing cooperatives

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CNP-South Texas Cooperative Local Beef Initiative

June 11, 2025- Hosted CNP-South Texas Cooperative Local Beef Initiative to promote upcoming Local Beef Products RFP bid.

Local cattle ranchers, beef processors were invited to explore ways to overcome challenges to bring locally raised fresh beef products to school cafeterias

- Institute For Ecology Scholarship And Health
- UTRGV Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement (S.A.R.A.)
- PSJA ISD - PSJA Buying Local Beef
- Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension

Review Beef Products RFP, obtain feedback from members, ranchers and processors



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Upcoming Workshops
Region One ESC

- **Workshop 376964** - Vendor Outreach: Connecting with Cattle Ranchers, Beef Processors, and Produce Growers, November 12, 2025, 9:00AM – 12:00 PM

SCAN ME



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Maestro Forecasts

- CNP-STC members submit beef products forecasts via Maestro portal
- Forecasts are compiled to obtain quantities being requested
- Total dollar estimate revealed to determine value worth of the Beef Products contract
- CNP-STC Beef Products bid packet is created
- Submitted to e-BuyOne Bonfire bidding system
- **Maestro Beef Products New-Rev CE Forecast**

https://www.maestroforecasting.org/ords/mrpcdata/r/mrpcesc1/login?session=4257474945784

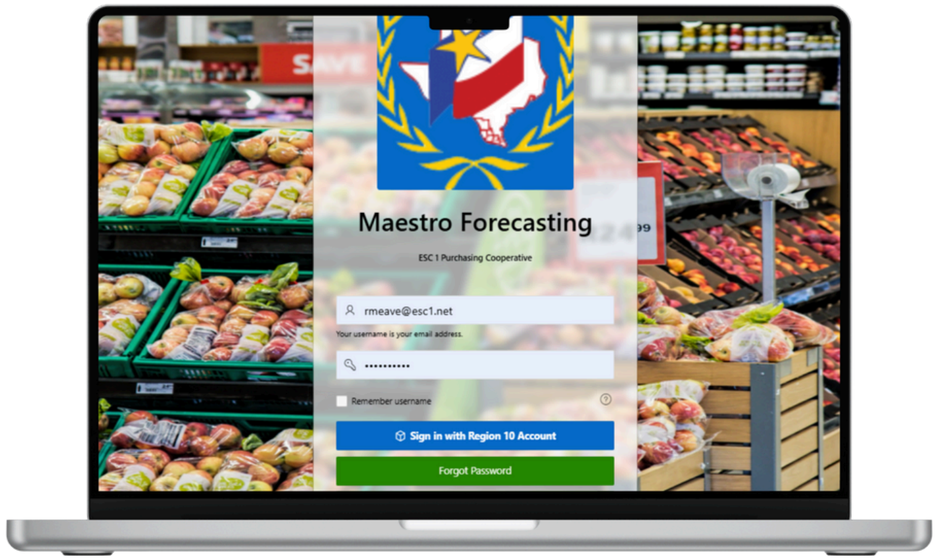
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CNP-STC Beef Products RFP 26-0168
Maestro Forecast Request

Beef Products - NEW- revised

- October 28, 2025, forecast request sent to CNP-STC members
- November 14, 2025, due date to submit beef products forecast for SY 25-26







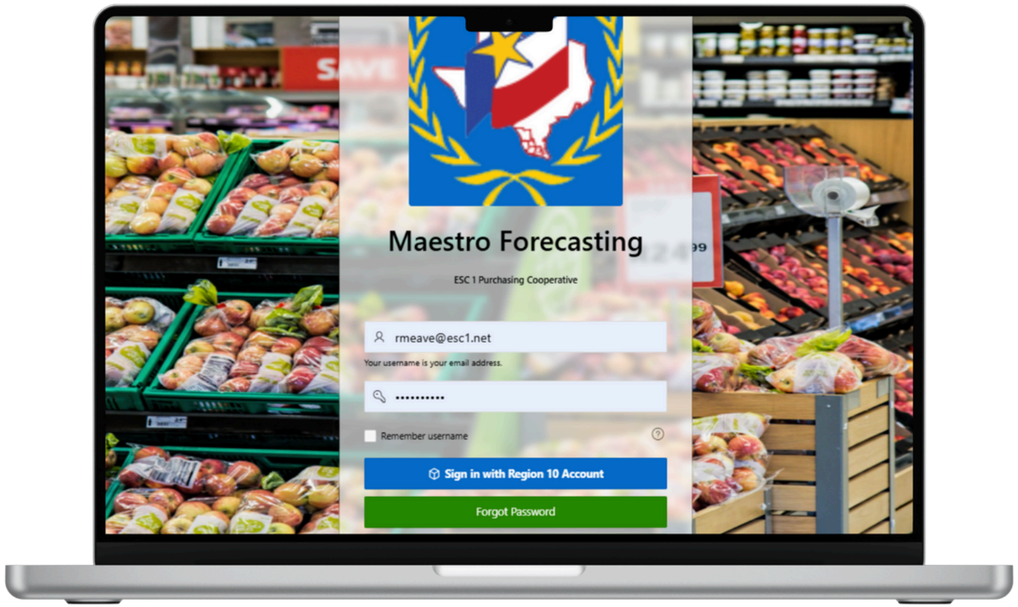
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CNP-STC Beef Products RFP 26-0168
Maestro Forecast Request

School District Forecast Entries

- Brownsville ISD
- Freer ISD
- Hidalgo ISD
- La Villa ISD
- London ISD
- Monte Alto ISD
- Odem-Edroy ISD
- Progreso ISD
- Raymondville ISD
- Rio Grande City CISD
- Sinton ISD



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CNP-STC Beef Products RFP 26-0168
Maestro Forecast Request

School Year	Catalog	Product	Pack Size	Unit Of Measure	Buy American	Product Description	Qty
2025-2026	Beef Products-NEW - Rev	Beef brisket, raw,Packed 20 lb.	15-20 lb	20 LB		Beef brisket, raw, USDA select or higher, unseasoned, trimmed with no sinew or silver skin attached. Catch weight approximately 15-20 lb. each. **Packed 20 lb**. frozen	
Total							180
2025-2026	Beef Products-NEW - Rev	Beef brisket, raw,Packed 40 lb	35-40 lb	40 LB		Beef brisket, raw, USDA select or higher, unseasoned, trimmed with no sinew or silver skin attached. Catch weight approximately 35-40 lb. each. Packed 40 lb. frozen	
Total							1,650
2025-2026	Beef Products-NEW - Rev	Beef cuts into strips, Pack 4/10 lb	4/10 lb	40 lb		Beef cuts into strips, raw, USDA choice, unseasoned, trimmed with no sinew or silver skin attached from cattle raised in Texas and processed in Texas. Beef may not contain any added water, phosphates, binders, or extenders. Used for stir fry, fajita applications. Pack 4/10 lb. frozen	
Total							184
2025-2026	Beef Products-NEW - Rev	Beef cuts into strips, Pack 25 lb.	25-50 lb	25-50 lb		Beef inside skirts, raw, USDA choice, unseasoned, trimmed with no sinew or silver skin attached whole pieces or slabs from cattle raised in Texas and processed in Texas. Beef may not contain any added water, phosphates, binders, or extenders. Catch weight approximately 25 lb. Acceptable: 50 lb. frozen.	
Total							1,015

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CNP-STC Beef Products RFP 26-0168
Maestro Forecast Request

School Year	Catalog	Product	Pack Size	Unit Of Measure	Buy American	Product Description	Qty
2025-2026	Beef Products-NEW - Rev	Beef, Cubed/Diced, Packed 4/10 lb	4/10 lb	40 LB		Beef, Cubed/Diced, raw, USDA choice beef cut, 1/2-7/8" cubes, raw, unseasoned, trimmed with no sinew or silver skin attached, from cattle raised in Texas and processed in Texas. Beef may not contain any added water, phosphates, binders, or extenders, Used for stew, carne guisada applications. Packed 4/10 lb. frozen	
Total							**1,638**
2025-2026	Beef Products-NEW - Rev	Beef, ground, 80/20, Pack size: 4/10 lb	4/10 lb	40 LB		Beef, ground, 80/20 lean to fat ratio, raw, from cattle raised in Texas and processed into ground beef in Texas. Beef may not contain any added water, phosphates, or extenders. Price per pound, packed 10lb, packages no more than 4/10 lbs. per case. Acceptable: or equal. Pack size: 4/10 lb. frozen	
Total							**280**
2025-2026	Beef Products-NEW - Rev	Beef, ground, 85/15, Pack size: 4/10 lb	4/10 lb	40 LB		Beef, ground, 85/15 lean to fat ratio, raw, from cattle raised in Texas and processed into ground beef in Texas. Beef may not contain any added water, phospates, or extenders. Price per pound, packed 10lb, packages no more than 4/10 lbs. per case. Acceptable: or equal. Pack size: 4/10 lb. frozen	
Total							**2,515**
2025-2026	Beef Products-NEW - Rev	Beef,100%, 80/20,Pack size: 40 lbs	4/10 lb	40 LB		Beef,100%, 80/20, ground burger patties, 1/3 lb each, raw, from cattle raised in Texas and processed into ground beef in Texas. Beef may not contain any added water, phosphates, extenders, or fillers. Price per pound, packed 10 lbs, packages no more than 4/10 lbs. per case. Pack size: 40 lbs/case. Frozen for freshness	
Total							**76**

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CNP-STC Beef Products RFP 26-0168
Maestro Forecast Request

School Year	Catalog	Product	Pack Size	Unit Of Measure	Buy American	Product Description	Qty
2025-2026	Beef Products-NEW - Rev	Beef,100%, 80/20, packed 3 patties per pack	4/10 lb	40 LB		Beef,100%, 80/20, ground burger patties, 1/3lb each, raw, from cattle raised in Texas and processed into ground beef in Texas. Beef may not contain any added water, phosphates, extenders, or fillers. Burgers packed 3 patties per pack, seperated by food grade paper. Price per pound, packed 1 lb in weight, vacuum sealed and frozen for freshness. Case weight 40 lbs/case	
Total							50

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CNP-STC Beef Products
RFP 25-0168







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CNP-STC Beef Products RFP 26-0168

- **Beef inside skirts**, 25-50 LB
- **Beef, Cubed/Diced** - 30 LB
- **Beef, ground**, 85/15 lean to fat ratio - 4/10 lb. frozen
- **Beef brisket**, 50-75 LB
- **Beef cuts into strips** - 4/10 LB
- **Beef patties**, beef,100%, 80/20, ground burger patties, 1/3 LB 4/10 LBS
- **Beef, ground**, 80/20, 4/10 LBS
  Beef, Cubed/Diced, USDA choice beef cut, 1/2-7/8" 4/10 LB



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CNP-STC Beef Products RFP 26-0168

Tentative timeline

- November 2025, obtain forecasted quantities from CNP-STC school district members
- December 2025 - Open bid in ebuyOne e-Procurement portal
- January 2026 - Close bid. Evaluate submitted bids, recommend and award
- February 2026 - Present RFP to Board of Directors meeting for approval.
- March 1 ,2026 - Contract goes into effect



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CNP-STC Fresh Produce RFP 23-0136

- **Effective Dates: November 16, 2023 – August 31, 2024, with four (1-year) extension options.**
- **Current Term:** Extension 2, effective September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026, with two (1-year) extension options remaining.
- **Final Extension:** The last one-year extension will go into effect September 1, 2027 - August 31, 2028.
- Before the final one-year extension expires, the process of re-bidding for new Fresh Produce RFP will begin.





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CNP-STC Fresh Produce RFP 23-0136

Awarded vendors:

- Aspire Staffing Incorporated dba Verdant Exchange
- Nicho Produce Company, Inc. Edinburg, TX.

  Labatt Food Service, LLC – San Antonio, TX.



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CNP-STC Fresh Produce RFP 23-0136

South Texas Cooperative

- **School districts submitted forecasts**
  - Agua Dulce ISD
  - Banquete ISD
  - Ben Bolt-Palito Blanco ISD
  - Brownsville ISD
  - Donna ISD
  - Dr. M L Garza Gonzalez Charter School
  - Edcouch-Elsa ISD
  - Flour Bluff ISD
  - Freer ISD
  - Harlingen CISD
  - La Feria ISD
  - La Gloria ISD
  - La Joya ISD
  - La Villa ISD
  - Laredo ISD
  - Lasara ISD
  - London ISD
  - Mercedes ISD
  - Mission CISD
  - Monte Alto ISD
  - Odem-Edroy ISD
  - Pawnee ISD
  - Pettus ISD
  - PSJA ISD
  - Port Aransas ISD
  - Ricardo ISD
  - Rio Grande City CISD
  - Rio Hondo ISD
  - Riviera ISD
  - Roma ISD

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CNP-STC Fresh Produce RFP 23-0136

- **School districts submitted forecasts**
  - San Benito ISD
  - San Isidro ISD
  - San Perlita ISD
  - Santa Maria ISD
  - Santa Rosa ISD
  - Sharyland ISD
  - Sinton ISD
  - South Texas Technologies, Inc. /Horizon Montessori
  - Vanguard Academy
  - Valley View ISD
  - West Oso ISD

South Texas Cooperative

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Vendor Opportunities

- Bonfire/ e-BuyOne
  - Register to view and respond to bid opportunities https://esc1.bonfirehub.com/portal/?tab=openOpportunities
  - User friendly process
  - Opens doors once you become an awarded vendor
  - Creating a vendor profile/registering in eBuyOne DOES NOT recognize your company as an “awarded vendor” under any existing contracts. It only serves to provide Region One ESC with your company's contact information and the opportunity to receive an auto-email notification when pertinent bid/proposal opportunities are solicited that match the Commodity Codes selected in your eBuyOne vendor profile.*



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GUEST SPEAKERS

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UTRGV Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement (SARA)

- Grants & Resources for Local Agriculture

Presented By: Sara Saenz

https://www.utrgv.edu/sara/index.htm

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

- **Ashley Gregory,** Horticulture Agent
  Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Hidalgo County

- **Jennifer Herrera-**Horticulture Agent -Master Gardener Coordinator Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Cameron County



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Region One ESC
Migrant Education Program

- **Fabiola Camacho**



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Verdant Exchange



Hernan Colmenero - CEO

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Upcoming Workshops
Region One ESC

- **Workshop 377164**- Vendor Outreach: Connecting with Cattle Ranchers, Beef Processors, and Produce Growers- June 3, 2026, 9:00AM – 12:00 PM

- **Workshop 377185**- Vendor Outreach: Connecting with Cattle Ranchers, Beef Processors, and Produce Growers- **Spanish Edition,** June 3, 2026, 1:00PM – 4:00 PM



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Food Summit
Buyer Supplier Event 2026

- April 22 -23, 2026, Region One ESC
- Connect local farmers, ranchers, distributors and school nutrition staff
- Explore ways to source more local foods for South Texas schools
- More details to follow



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Cooperative Team



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USDA & TDA Grants & Program

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley™

Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement

Presented by:

Sara Saenz

956 - 533 - 0557

Sara.saenz01@utrgv.edu

CNP- South Texas Cooperative: Vendor Outreach Event

TEXAS AGRICULTURE GRANT PROGRAM

RESOURCE: TDA

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement

Introduction to the Program

House Bill 43 (HB 43) passed during the 89th Texas Legislative Session created the Texas Agricultural Grant Program, modified the Young Farmer Grant.

- Age restriction removed – now open to all producers, not just ages 18–46.
- Grant cap increased – from $20,000 to up to $500,000.
- Matching requirement lowered – from 100% to 10%.



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Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement

Eligibility Criteria

Expanded Applicant Scope

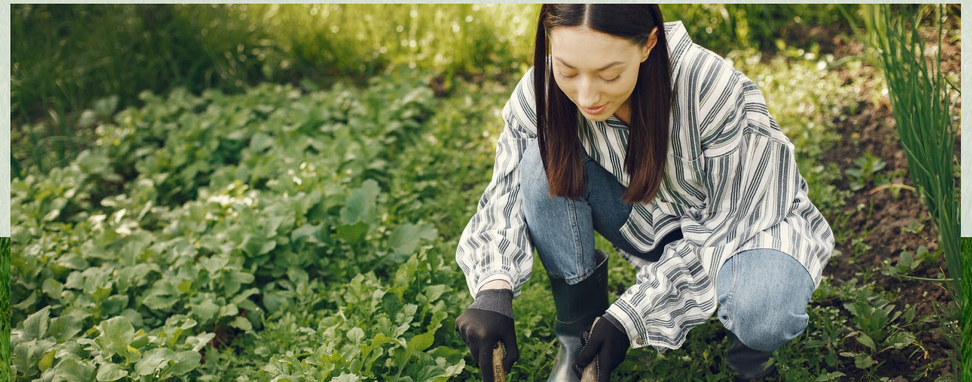
- The grant program now includes producers, processors, marketers, and exporters in agriculture.

Nonprofits and Education

- Nonprofits preserving agricultural land and agricultural higher education institutions qualify for eligibility.

Specialized Agricultural Entities

- Entities involved in boll weevil eradication and key businesses like feed stores and cotton gins are included.





The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement

Timeline



The following is an estimated timeline of implementation.

Milestone	Action
June 20, 2025	HB 43 becomes effective
July 30, 2025	TAFA Board meets to begin implementation discussions
Aug – Sept 2025	TAFA Board meets to draft Texas Administrative Code Rule Changes
Estimated ~~*October*~~ November 2025	Publish Texas Administrative Code Rule Changes in Texas Register and accept public comment (minimum 30 days)
Estimated ~~*November*~~ December 2025	File rules for Adoption in the Texas Register
Estimated January 2026	Post Agricultural Grant Application Materials

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement





How to Apply

- Applications will be managed through TDA-GO (Texas Department of Agriculture Grants Online).
- Producers should sign up for email notifications for updates:
- Texas Agricultural Grant Info.

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement



Value Added Producer Grant Program

RESOURCE: USDA

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement

VAPG

Purpose: Helps farmers and ranchers increase income by turning raw commodities into value-added products (e.g., milk → cheese, fruit → jam).

Funding:

- Up to $75,000 for planning grants (feasibility, business, marketing plans).
- Up to $250,000 for working capital (processing, marketing, inventory).

Match Requirement: 1:1 match (cash or eligible in-kind contributions).

Eligibility: Independent producers, farmer/rancher cooperatives, producer-based businesses.

Uses of Funds:

- Planning activities (feasibility studies, business plans).
- Working capital for producing and marketing value-added products.

Not Covered: Land/equipment purchases, regular farming activities, R&D, salaries for owners/family.

Competitive Program: National competition; strong business and marketing plans required.

Opens: Typically in spring

How to Apply: Applications will be managed through USDA - **VAPG Portal**

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement

USDA PLAN TO FORTIFY THE AMERICAN BEEF INDUSTRY



RESOURCE: USDA.GOV

STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN AND GROW BEEF PRODUCTION

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement

Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement
UTRGV

THREE COORDINATED PRIORITIES

PROTECTING AND IMPROVING THE BUSINESS OF RANCHING

EXPANDING PROCESSING, CONSUMER TRANSPARENCY, AND MARKET ACCESS

BUILDING DEMAND ALONGSIDE DOMESTIC SUPPLY

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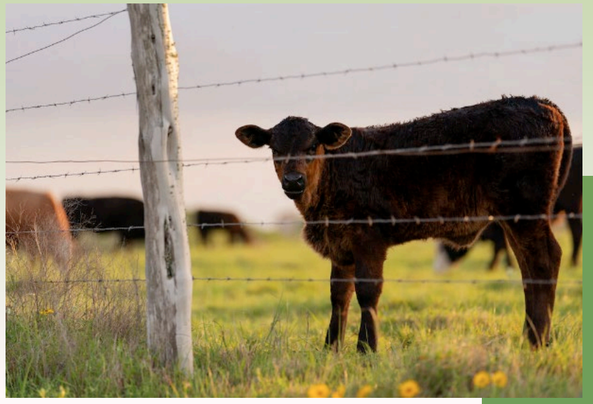
PROTECTING AND IMPROVING THE BUSINESS OF RANCHING:

A. Expand Grazing Access

- USDA & DOI will open more federal land for grazing.
- Easier access to vacant grazing allotments, fewer permit delays, and no net loss of grazing rights nationwide

B. Predator Management

- Reduce livestock losses from predators
- Better compensation rules for predator kills; reforms to make predator control and endangered species rules less burdensome.



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C. DISASTER RELIEF

- Improved programs for drought, storms, fires.
- Faster payments under Livestock Indemnity & Forage Programs.
- Coverage for unborn livestock and predator losses.

D. AFFORDABLE RISK TOOLS

- Lower cost for insurance and risk programs.
- Lower premiums, expanded subsidies, and longer eligibility for “beginning rancher” programs (up to 10 years instead of 5).

E. SUPPORT VETERAN RANCHERS

- Support veterans entering ranching.
- Priority access to grants and programs under AgVets to help veterans start and grow cattle operations.

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Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement

EXPANDING PROCESSING, CONSUMER TRANSPARANCY, AND MARKETS FOR RANCHERS:



A. Transparent Labeling

- “Product of USA” Rule: Only beef from cattle born, raised, and slaughtered in the U.S. can use this label.
- Enforcement starts Jan 1, 2026.
- Goal: Stop misleading labels and protect U.S. ranchers.

B. Boost Local Processing

- USDA will increase small and regional meat plants.
- Cut inspection costs for small processors by up to 75%.
- More local beef in schools and institutions.

C. Expand Market Options

- Support direct-to-consumer sales and farm-to-school programs.
- Grants for ranchers to sell locally and online.
- USDA will help ranchers reach restaurants and retailers.

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D. Lower Costs for Ranchers

- Deregulate outdated rules that block small processors.
- Reduce red tape for plant approvals and meat inspection.
- Goal: Make processing cheaper and faster.

E. Consumer Education

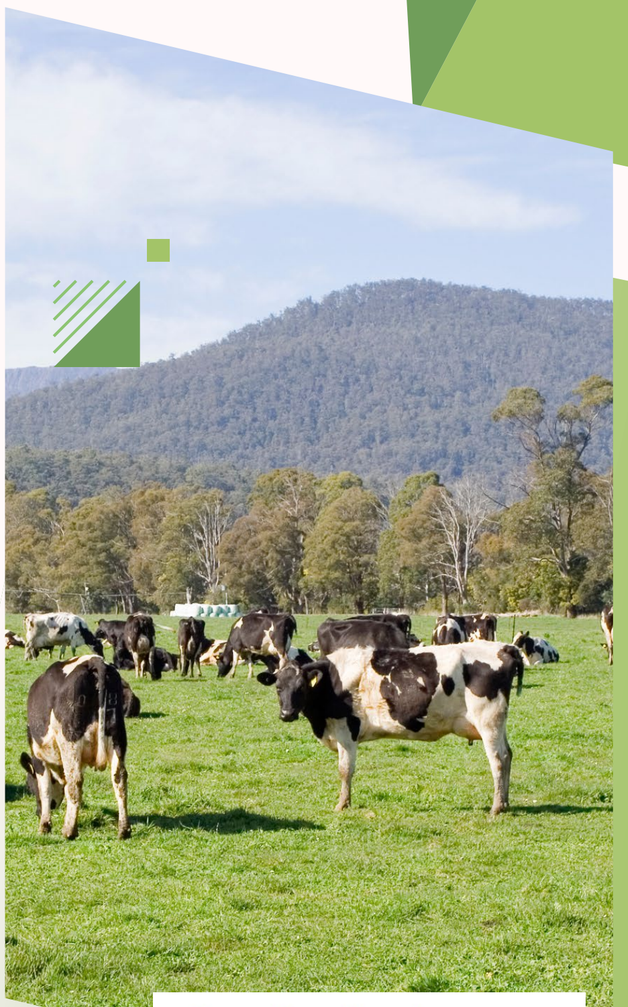
- USDA will run campaigns on American beef quality.
- Promote truthful labeling and nutrition benefits.
- Build trust between ranchers and consumers

F. Export Opportunities

- Expand international markets for U.S. beef.
- Work on trade deals to keep ranchers competitive.
- Focus on premium American beef branding

G. Price Stability

- Increase processing capacity to avoid bottlenecks.
- More plants = less risk of price spikes.
- Goal: Fair prices for ranchers and consumers



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Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement

BUILD DEMAND ALONGSIDE DOMESTIC SUPPLY:

A. Grow Domestic Demand

- USDA will promote U.S. beef in schools, hospitals, and institutions.
- Expand farm-to-school programs for local beef.
- Marketing campaigns to highlight American beef quality and nutrition.
- Goal: Keep demand strong while herds rebuild.

B. Boost International Markets

- USDA will open new export markets for U.S. beef.
- Work on trade deals to sell premium American beef globally.
- Branding programs to make U.S. beef the top choice worldwide.
- Goal: More buyers = better prices for ranchers.



The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement

Thank You

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The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Advancement

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

FRESH TRAYS

A Path for Farm to School Success!

FRESH TRAYS TEXAS FARM FRESH GRANT






square meals

Food and Nutrition Division
Farm Fresh Initiative

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

Fraud Hotline: 1-866-5-FRAUD-4 or 1-866-537-2834 | P.O. Box 12847 | Austin, TX 78711
Toll Free: (877) TEX-MEAL | For the hearing impaired: (800) 735-2989 (TTY)

This product was funded by USDA.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Updated 11/13/2025
www.SquareMeals.org

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

FRESH TRAYS TEXAS FARM FRESH GRANT

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

THIS INSTITUTION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension service and Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) are providing this program through funding from a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm to School State Formula Grant and utilizing some copyrighted materials from the "Bringing the Farm to School" project with permission from USDA, National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) and National Farm to School Network (NFSN).

LOCAL PRODUCER TRAININGS
Bringing the Farm to School

USDA

NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL NETWORK

NCAT
NATIONAL CENTER FOR APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY

Connecting Producers and Schools

Utilizing Extension networks, the FRESH TRAYS Program offers a variety of educational and networking opportunities for Texas farmers, ranchers & fishers to provide locally grown fresh foods to schools and early childcare centers.









FRESH TRAYS GRANT

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

PROGRAM GOAL:

Connecting Producers and Schools

Utilizing Extension networks, the

Farmers
Ranchers and
Educators
Serving
Healthy
Texans to
Reconnect
Agriculture to
Youth in
Schools

(FRESH TRAYS) Program offers educational and networking opportunities for Texas farmers, ranchers & fishers to provide locally grown fresh foods to schools and early childcare centers.









FRESH TRAYS GRANT

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

What is FRESH TRAYS?



The FRESH TRAYS program will tackle schools' logistical challenges, seasonal change, budget constraints, food safety, educational integration, and community engagement, while meeting producers' needs.

Participating producers gain practical insights and network with industry experts and fellow producers, fostering a sense of community and collaboration.

FRESH TRAYS GRANT

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

What is the purpose of FRESH TRAYS?



EXPAND
Producers' knowledge and understanding of Farm to School programs.



INCREASE
Participation in Farm to School activities, including education about food and agriculture



GROW
the amount of local food that Texas producers sell directly to schools

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension



Farm to School

Sourcing Locally

- Ensures our youngest Texans receive fresh, nutritious food
- Supports our communities and local economies
- Reduces food safety risks
- Explores unique flavors and seasonal specialties
- Helps local producers thrive



FRESH TRAYS GRANT
TEXAS FARM FRESH

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

School Meal Programs by the Numbers

National School Lunch Program (2024)

- Nearly 100,000 schools participate
- 28.5 million students served each day
- $17.18 billion in federal spending each year

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (2021)

- $202.9 million in federal spending

Total dollars spent on local food:

$696 million dollars (2018-2019)



TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

Farm to School Advantage: WIN-WIN For All



Healthy Children

Kids gain hands on learning experiences and develop healthy eating habits.

Happy Producers & Schools

Producers benefit from significant local food purchases, stable markets and long-term revenues. Schools see increased community support, reduced waste, and lower cost meals with seasonal varieties.

Communities Thrive

Farm to School connections strengthen local economies and foster a resilient, sustainable food system.

FRESH TRAYS GRANT

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION



FRESH TRAYS Certification

FRESH TRAYS

Producer Certification

Producers who complete the four module FRESH TRAYS program and the PRE and POST surveys will receive a **"Farm to Kids Ready" designation.**

Additionally, the producer is eligible for:

- **$250 stipend** at completion of training
- Opportunities to set up contracts with local area schools and childcare centers (LFS grants) via Networking Sessions



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension



CONTACT US

We'd love to talk MORE about **FRESH TRAYS**

freshtrays.tamu.edu

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Verdant Exchange

Hernán Colmenero
Founder, President

Who we are

- Marketplace Food Hub
- Based in Edinburg, TX
- Family-owned
- Founded in 2023
- Operating in RGV



What we do

- Source from local farmers
- Aggregate
- Repack
- Deliver

Why do we do it?

Philosophy

Why is it important?

- Leads to holistic thinking
- Connects us to community & environment
- Strengthens economy







How we do it



The Result

Local food, low price, simple ordering process, great customer service.

Who orders from Verdant Exchange?

School staff who

- Care about taste,
- Are conscious of nutritional content of food and their impact on student learning,
- Have begun to think about the power they have as an institutional purchaser and want to wield it in a positive way, for the benefit of the community and students.

Who do we source from?

Obst Family Farm

Terra Preta

Sentli Center for Regenerative Agriculture

Saenz Produce

LL Farms

Montanez Produce

Village Farms

Castillo Produce

Rio Fresh

Lone Star Citrus Growers

South Texas Organics

How to order

Use Region One ESC CNP-STC Fresh Produce Bid

Respond to email

Or email noemi@verdantexchange.net

Deliveries will be right to your warehouse or school

Looking forward

- Beef aggregator and purveyor
- Minimally processed products
- Online ordering
  - One click login
  - Edit order, “buy again”, see status of order
  - Request quotes, manage invoices
  - And more!

Contact

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