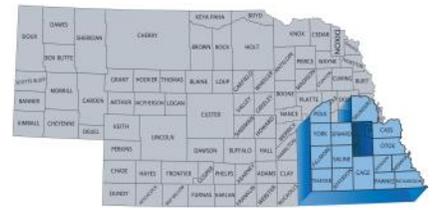


# SEND D

Southeast Nebraska Development District



## NEWS FROM THE CENTER FOR RURAL AFFAIRS

The Center's [Rural Enterprise Assistance Project \(REAP\)](#) has been fortunate to have a strong partnership with [Nebraska's Economic Development Districts](#). It's been a boost to both of us. Even better, it's led to startup and expansion of rural businesses through collaborative lending, training, and technical assistance. In 1994, when REAP first expanded to southeast Nebraska, the key organizations helping out were Five Rivers RC&D and the Southeast Nebraska Development District.

[Jeff Reynolds](#) stated "I was the first "Field Service Representative" for REAP in southeast Nebraska. No question, without the help of Five Rivers RC&D and the Southeast Nebraska Development District, we would have struggled to get going in that corner of the state. The strong coalition of the RC&D and Development District provided the contacts, knowledge of the area, and referrals to be successful."

David Taladay, Executive Director of the [Southeast Nebraska Development District \(SEND D\)](#), commented, "Congratulations to REAP on your 25th Anniversary! The district was an initial partner in developing micro-business lending in Southeast Nebraska in 1994 and has continued that relationship to this day. As partners in some projects and collaborators in others, we have found REAP - and especially all your staff - to be extremely competent and customer oriented. We have partnered on loan projects and provided technical assistance as well as received guidance from the great people at REAP."

Over REAP's 25-year history, the Nebraska Development Districts have played a critical role by providing referrals, collaborating with training activities, partnering in loan packaging situations, and much, much more. The expertise of Development District staff is tremendous and has helped to make a positive impact with rural entrepreneurs.

### Here's what several other Nebraska Development Districts have to say:

"The [South Central Economic Development District, Inc. \(SCEDD\)](#) appreciates the assistance to small businesses provided by REAP, specifically Dena Beck and Monica Braun, who have collaborated with us on multiple projects. One of the greatest impacts of this partnership has been the PK Partnership, which offers business training in Phelps and Kearney Counties, specifically the PK EDGE (Enhancing, Developing and Growing Entrepreneurs) Class. The district also depends on REAP staff to assist potential and existing businesses, and they are always available and willing to serve the businesses we refer to them." - Sharon Hueftle, Executive Director of the South Central Economic Development District, Inc.

"REAP has been an integral part of [Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District's \(NENEDD\)](#) business loan program for many years.

- Continued on back page -

## DECEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER



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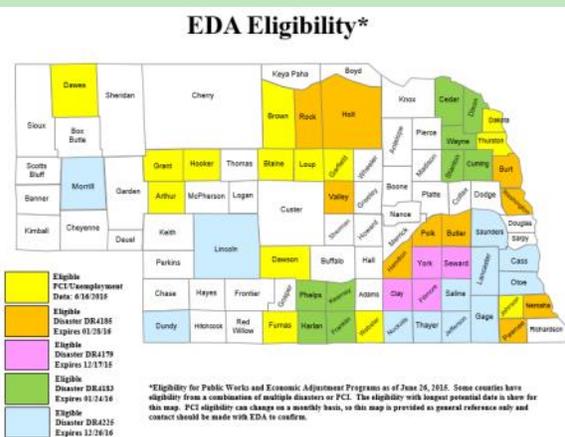
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## EDA Grants

EDA solicits applications from rural and urban areas to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. Grants and cooperative agreements made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that incorporate new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. For questions concerning EDA project eligibility, contact Craig Eberle at [ceberle@sendd.org](mailto:ceberle@sendd.org).



EDA eligibility by county

## Funding and Design Assistance Available for Rural Communities

The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ (CIRD) has issued a request for proposals to rural communities interested in applying for funding to host a community design workshop in either 2016 or 2017. CIRD is a National Endowment for the Arts leadership initiative in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Project for Public Spaces, Inc., along with the Orton Family Foundation. CIRD offers annual competitive funding to six small towns or rural communities to host a two-and-a-half day community development and design workshop. With assistance from a wide range of design, planning, and creative placemaking professionals, the workshops are intended to bring together local leaders from non-profits, community organizations, and government agencies to develop actionable solutions to the communities' pressing development challenges.

The communities will receive additional support through webinars, conference calls, and web-based resources on [www.rural-design.org](http://www.rural-design.org). Design and development challenges include but are not limited to the following: Main Street revitalization, managing and shaping community growth, the design of community-supportive transportation systems, preservation of natural and historic landscapes and buildings, protecting working agricultural lands, and maximizing the role of arts and culture as an economic driver for local and regional economies. Since 1991 CIRD has convened more than 70 workshops in all regions of the country, empowering residents to leverage local assets today in order to build better places to live, work, and play in the future. The deadline for submitting a proposal is Tuesday January 12, 2016. Successful applicants will receive a \$10,000 stipend (that must be matched one-to-one) in addition to in-kind professional design expertise and technical assistance valued at \$35,000.

## Center for Rural Affairs (continued from front page)

Gene Rahn, a REAP Loan Specialist since 1996, became a member of the district's Northeast Loan Committee in August of 1999. We have worked with the entire REAP staff over the years throughout our 26-county region in northeast and north central Nebraska.

REAP staff offer a professional approach to providing technical assistance to small businesses throughout the state. They build collaborative lending partnerships with banks, development districts, local revolving loan funds, and other lenders, providing additional capital for small business owners to start or expand their businesses in Nebraska." - Jeff Christensen, NENEDD Business Loan Specialist

We look forward to continuing our strong partnership with Nebraska's Development Districts as REAP continues to evolve along with the Center's Certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), the Rural Investment Corporation. You can find out more about Nebraska's Development Districts, including contact information, at [www.nrocne.com](http://www.nrocne.com).

## SENDD Staff Contacts

SENDD has recently re-organized the primary staff contact assignments by county. For questions related to project planning, grant writing, available resources, agency referrals, etc.:

Northern Counties: Polk, York, Seward, Saunders, and Cass – Rian Harkins

Southwest Counties: Fillmore, Thayer, Saline, Jefferson, and Gage – Judi Meyer

Southeast Counties: Otoe, Johnson, Nemaha, Pawnee, and Richardson – Lisa Beethe

For questions regarding Business Loans please contact Craig Eberle.

For questions regarding Nuisance Programs please contact Rian Harkins.

SERN contact: Craig Eberle

SET contact: Lisa Beethe

## USDA AWARDS FUNDS

Congratulations to two growing businesses in the SENDD area on their award of USDA Rural Development's [Value-Added Producer Grant program](#) funds.

"This funding will enable farmers and ranchers to develop new products, improve the bottom line for their operations and help create a robust local and regional food system," Rural Development Deputy Under Secretary Vernita F. Dore said. "Value-Added Producer Grants provide capital to enable ag producers to grow their business through diversification."

The two businesses are:

Saline County: **Lone Tree Foods, LLC** received \$4,000 to develop an efficient online ordering system, which will improve access to local foods by increasing their sales capacity. They will also implement a Farm-to-Faith program that will connect faith communities with farm fresh local foods.

Saunders County: **Darby Springs Farm, LLC** owned and operated by Crystal and William Powers, will use \$49,999 to create and expand their farmstead ice cream and milk caramel topping. These products are made from local grass fed milk, eggs, and other fresh local fruits, nuts, and herbs that are produced or grown on the Darby Springs Farm.

Value-Added Producer Grants can be used to develop new agricultural products or additional markets for existing ones. Military veterans, socially-disadvantaged and beginning farmers and ranchers, operators of small- and medium-sized family farms and ranches, and farmer and rancher cooperatives are given priority when applying for these grants. *USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*