



FIRST a word from
our partners

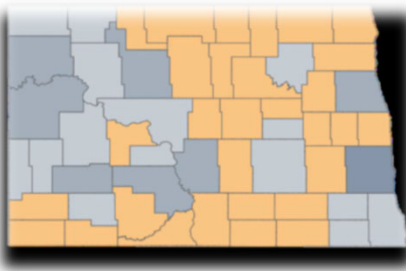


THE NEED in North Dakota

Small towns matter

- 355 cities in North Dakota
 - ✓ 92 > 500 population
 - ✓ 263 < 500 population
- Approx. 50 have local or county economic development staff
- Many can't afford a dedicated economic development professional.

Counties that Lost Population 2010-2020 (30)



WHY this work matters

Rural North Dakota is resilient — and still facing real pressures

- Essential services remain fragile
 - Emergency response, healthcare, grocery, childcare, housing
- Small businesses face capital gaps
 - Startups, expansions, transitions
- Communities need tools to compete for workforce & investment

Rural electric & broadband co-ops are uniquely positioned to help.



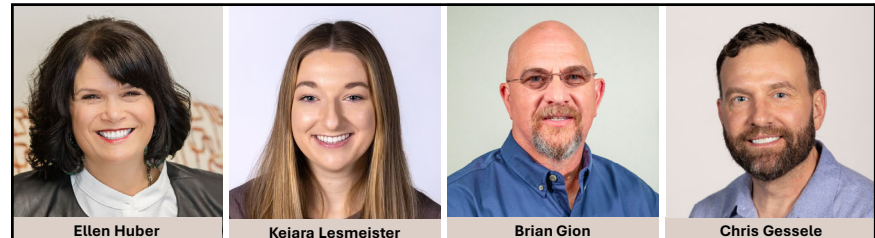
The cooperative ADVANTAGE

Natural rural development partners

- Trusted conveners & community connectors
- Strong track record
 - Community involvement
 - Operation Round Up
 - Revolving loan funds
 - Partners in use of the USDA Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant (REDLG) program
- Ability to leverage partnerships & outside dollars
- Cooperative principles in action
 - Cooperation among cooperatives
 - Concern for community



RURAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Rural electric & broadband co-op leaders
@ Mott Health Care Center



NDARECs
RURAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

OUR ROLE: expand capacity of co-ops to strengthen communities

- Provide cooperative development education & assistance
- Coordinate regional and statewide strategies and initiatives to address rural challenges
- Help obtain grants & financing for small business & community development projects



An integrated approach to serving RURAL AREAS

- 3 affiliated organizations
- Led by rural electric and broadband co-ops operating in North Dakota
 - Providing technical assistance
 - Connection to resources
 - Funding & financing



North Dakota
Rural Electric Cooperatives
Foundation

CO-OP INVESTMENT yields in 2025-2026



- \$300,000 - Rural Grant Development Program Grant for technical assistance services
- \$950,000 - Rural Development Finance Corporation low-interest loans for small business & community projects
- \$5.3 million - RDFC meat & food processing loans
- \$12.6 million - North Central Regional Grocery & Local Food Hub Initiative 7-year grant + major facility donation
- \$464,000 - grants for community projects from anonymous donor
- \$1 million - secured for Rural Grocery Sustainability Grant through legislative advocacy
- Education, outreach & training



Providing TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
Focusing on co-ops, rural businesses and organizations, plus systems-building



USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Cooperative Development Grant

STRATEGIC priorities

Expand access to essential services, create economic opportunities & strengthen communities.

Grocery access

Value-added agriculture

New co-op models

Regional collaboration



COOPERATIVE Development Services

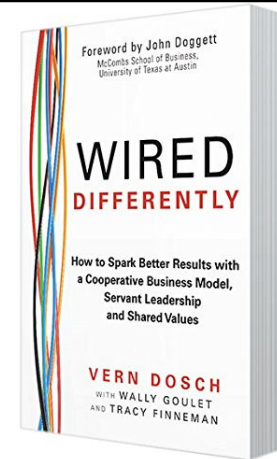
1. To address an unmet need.
2. To accomplish together what people can't do individually.
3. To create ownership, wealth and local control.



The cooperative BUSINESS MODEL

"... designed to produce goods and services in such a way that the cost of production is met and the goods and services are made affordable for the member/owners' advantage."

– From *Wired Differently* by Vern Dosch, former CEO of National Information Solutions Cooperative



FLEXIBLE financing for rural vitality

REVOLVING LOAN FUND

Supporting

- Small businesses
- Community facilities & rural services

Partnering with local lenders & community entities

Generally 2% interest rate

- Participation loans ($\leq 50\%$)
- Interest buydowns (50%)
- Community capital loans ($\leq 50\%$)

Rural electric & broadband co-ops

- 15 other revolving loan pools



2025-2026 COMMUNITY & SMALL BUSINESS LOANS

Rutland Oil, Rutland

TC Window Tint, Lisbon

Grand Valley Co., LaMoure

Kenmare Park District

Hazleton Development Corp.

Grade Co, Lisbon

Hankinson Community Development Corp.

Hi-way Servicenter, LaMoure & Edgely

Underwood Fire District

Wash Rack, New Salem

Schaff's Hardware & Gunsmithing, Carson



Grand Valley general store, LaMoure



NEARBY PROJECT: PAST COMMUNITY CAPITAL LOAN



City of Sheyenne



\$18,000 loan toward \$118,000 project



Roof repair of former school building



Renovated to serve as the Open Season Lodge & Event Center



Frontier Meats, Minot (opening summer in 2026)

NORTH DAKOTA FOOD IMPACT FUND

- \$10 million allocation from USDA Meat & Poultry Intermediary Lending Program with 10% RDFC match
 - \$7.4 million loaned 2026 year-to-date to support the start-up, retention & expansion of 12 meat processing businesses + 1 egg processor
- \$3.6 million remaining to lend by May 2027
- Loans structured as a participation with a lead lender
 - Up to 80% of total loan
 - Generally, a 2% interest rate

**PROGRESS
TOWARD GOAL**

\$11 MILLION

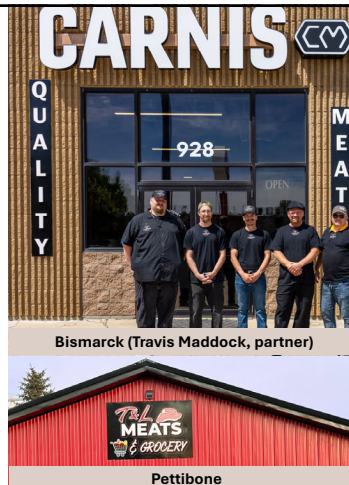


\$7.4 MILLION



NORTH DAKOTA FOOD IMPACT FUND

- Projects approved to date
 - Kramlich-Deede Meats, Medina
 - Yellowstone River Beef, Williston
 - T&L Meats, Pettibone
 - 6 In 1 Meats, New Salem
 - Frontier Meats, Minot
 - The Butcher Shop, Oakes
 - R3 Meats, Carrington
 - Planted, Kindred
 - St. Anthony Meats, St. Anthony
 - Quality Meats & Seafood, West Fargo
 - Maple Valley Locker, Enderlin
 - Carnis Meats, Bismarck
 - Wishek Sausage, Wishek



Bismarck (Travis Maddock, partner)

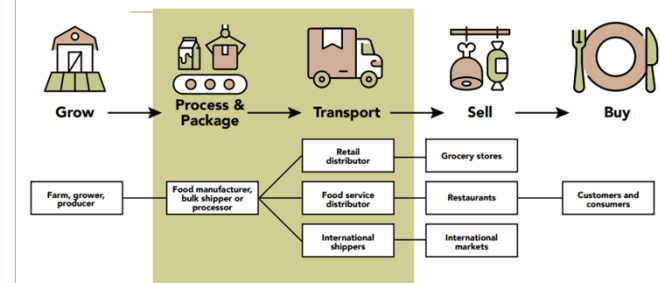
Pettibone

NORTH DAKOTA FOOD IMPACT FUND

Revolved Funds May Be Loaned For Other Food Industry Projects



Eligible Projects Are in the Mid-Tier of the Food Supply Chain



Grant writing & Loan Application Assistance



Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant Program (REDLG)

- Projects in areas of 50,000 or less in population
- 0% interest loan to local utility cooperative
- Financing: up to 80% of a project, capped at \$1M (whichever is less)
 - Requires resolution of support from eligible Rural Utilities Service (electric or telecommunications) borrower/intermediary.
 - If approved, co-op receives funding; loans it to ultimate recipient (0% interest, 10 years).
 - Local business or community facility project.
 - Applications submitted quarterly.
 - Competitively scored on several criteria.



REDLG scoring criteria

What makes for a strong application?

- Jobs creation
- Leveraging of supplemental funds (owner equity or “skin in the game”)
- Strength of the business plan
- Nature of the project (business or non-profit community facility)
- Consistency with rural development strategic plans, mission and priorities
- County trends: population, per capita income, any loss in employment, long-term deterioration, or disaster declaration
- Any past REDLG project participation by the sponsoring co-op
- Whether the location is rural



ABLE to Celebrate

REDL \$2 million loan

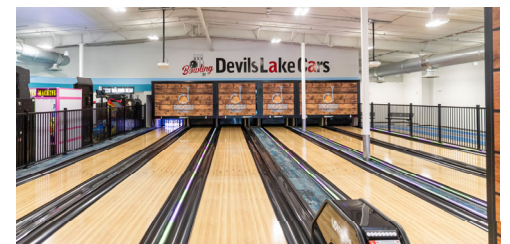
2023 approval; 2024 loan disbursement

1173 Mall, LLC, Dickinson (Consolidated Telcom)

- Subsidiary of ABLE, Inc.
- Purchased & renovated mall, using many spaces for retail services and employment of people with disabilities



- REDL \$2 million loan
- 2023 approval; 2024 disbursement
- Devils Lake Park Board
- \$3.6 million renovation of a former 30,000 sf grocery store into a family entertainment center (Nodak Electric)





- REDL \$2 million loan (2023 approval; 2025 loan disbursement)
- Expansion of Two Track Malting, LLC, Menoken (Capital Electric)



Anonymous DONOR

2024: Nearly \$500,000 in grants

- Drayton – grocery store repairs
- Devils Lake – Ramsey County Event Center
- Rolla – Legion Hall (rebuilding after a fire)
- Fort Ransom – community club addition & ADA family restroom

2025: \$463,874 in grants

- Mott – Health Care Center
- Elgin – Jacobson Memorial Hospital Care Center
- New England – Community Store (replace grocery store flooring)

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- ✓ Non-profit, community-owned or cooperative
- ✓ Serve rural, low-income areas
- ✓ Last \$ in
- ✓ Not for operating costs



Little Bobcats Daycare

MADDOCK

- Services: Business development technical assistance & grant writing
- \$32,000 grant attained from anonymous donor for building renovations



LEAN on us

You're the bridge between needs in your service areas & action.

You hear the signals first (businesses for sale due to retirement, expansion needs, pain points)

Connect people to tools early.

Contact us:
ehuber@ndarec.com or 701-667-6444
 Learn more: ndarec.com/ruraldevelopment



Rural on the Rise

Featuring keynote speaker
Lorie Vincent, CECD

**"Stand Up Rural America:
Forging a New Path of Growth & Prosperity"**

**"Regionalism: Winning Together Instead of
Losing Alone"**

Hosted by:

North Dakota Rural Electric Cooperatives
Foundation

Sept. 29, 2026
NDAREC Cooperative Center | 3201 Nygren Drive NW | Mandan, ND

*"Never doubt that a
small group of
thoughtful, committed
citizens can change
the world. Indeed, it's
the only thing that
ever has."*

- Margaret Mead, anthropologist




From
ALPHABET SOUP
to clarity

Questions?




Complete our evaluation
**Please share your
feedback**