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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **NDA TO AWARD ADDITIONAL GRANTS FOR MEAT PROCESSOR ASSISTANCE**

LINCOLN – Nebraska is a leader in meat production and processing and a vital part of our nation’s food supply. Last year, with grant funding from the Independent Processor Assistance Program (IPAP), 62 livestock producers and meat processors improved and expanded on Nebraska’s meat processing capabilities in a variety of ways.

In 2024, the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) will award additional IPAP grant funds in the approximate amount of \$5.1 million to continue improving and expanding Nebraska’s meat processing capabilities. The money designated for this program comes from American Rescue Plan Act funds. NDA will begin accepting grant applications on Jan. 16, 2024. The deadline to apply is Feb. 16, 2024.

“From increasing freezer capacity to adding meat grinders, slicers and a smokehouse, Nebraska livestock producers and meat processors used the last round of IPAP grant funds to strengthen and expand their operations,” said NDA Director Sherry Vinton. “I’m impressed with the creative ideas used to support Nebraska’s food supply. This next round of grants will allow Nebraska producers and meat processors to implement even more projects to benefit meat processing today and strengthen the industry for tomorrow.”

IPAP grants are available to currently operating meat processors to facilitate improvements, enhancements, or expansions that will increase harvest capacity and/or the variety of products offered. Eligible processors must be currently operating as either a USDA-FSIS facility or a federally regulated custom-exempt slaughter and processing facility, while also complying with federal regulations. To be eligible, existing operations must be domiciled in the State of Nebraska and be registered in good standing with the Secretary of State to conduct business in Nebraska. Additionally, the processing facility’s existing sales revenue must be less than \$2.5 million, and it must employ fewer than 25 people.

IPAP grant proposals will be reviewed and scored using select criteria and a grant application software called AmpliFund. AmpliFund software training for IPAP applications will be available online Jan. 17, 2024, at 11 a.m. CST. Register here: <https://forms.office.com/g/Fcti2fszvK>. The training will be recorded and posted on the NDA website later.

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Previous recipients of grant funding will be eligible to apply, but preference will be given to applicants not previously awarded funding. Recipients may or may not receive the entire amount of funds requested. Individual grants could be awarded up to \$100,000 for eligible expenses incurred after Aug. 28, 2021. NDA and USDA will announce the projects receiving funding by the end of April.

Applications will be available on Jan. 16 at [nda.nebraska.gov/promotion/meat\\_processors](http://nda.nebraska.gov/promotion/meat_processors) and must be received by 11:59 p.m. CST on Feb. 16, 2024. Additional information and frequently asked questions about the IPAP grant process, can be found on the website above. Contact Megan Pernicek, NDA Federal Aid Administrator, at 402-471-6828 or [agr.arpa@nebraska.gov](mailto:agr.arpa@nebraska.gov) with questions.

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