



News Release

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2014 Local Agriculture and Seafood Act (LASA) Grant Recipients Announced

PROVIDENCE - The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management announces the 2014 recipients for the *Local Agriculture and Seafood Act (LASA) Grants Program*. A total of \$210,030 will be awarded to 17 recipients, including \$20,000 to be used by DEM and the RI Seafood Marketing Collaborative for a statewide local seafood promotion campaign. The *LASA Grants Program* Advisory Committee, established to advise and assist the DEM in matters related to the *LASA Grants Program*, received, reviewed and scored 92 applications for this first year, totaling \$1,474,822 in requested funds.

A list of the *LASA Grants Program* recipients, along with a brief description of each project is available at the end of this release.

“Rhode Islanders are eager to grow, eat and promote local food. The Local Agriculture and Seafood Grants program is focused on supporting the growth of our local food sector to meet the growing demand of consumers,” said DEM Director Janet Coit, who will recognize the winners at the annual Rhode Island Agriculture Day program at the State House on May 1. The event will take place at 2 p.m. in the Governor’s State Room.

“The LASA grant program is an important step forward in Rhode Island toward building a vibrant local food economy in relation to farming and fishing. It involves a unique and forward-thinking partnership between DEM, the RI Food Policy Council and other important non-profits who are committed to building a local, sustainable food system in Rhode Island,” said Ken Ayars, chief of the Division of Agriculture who served as chair of the LASA Grants Advisory Committee.

The Local Agriculture and Seafood Act of 2012 established a grants program within Rhode Island’s DEM Division of Agriculture to support the growth and marketing of local food and seafood in the state. The *LASA Grants Program* was made possible by a unique and unprecedented public-private partnership with \$100,000 in funding from the State of Rhode Island and \$210,000 in funds from the van Beuren Charitable Foundation, the Henry P. Kendall Foundation and the Rhode Island Foundation. DEM coordinated with the Rhode Island Food Policy Council (RIFPC) to administer the *LASA Grants Program*.

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2014 LASA Grants Program Awardees:

\$20,000 for the DEM and RI Seafood Marketing Collaborative's statewide seafood branding and marketing campaign

\$8,089 to Adam Yorks of Little Compton to install a root zone heating system into a high tunnel to extend the growing season of his farm

\$17,000 to Big Train Farm/Urban Edge Producer Collaborative in Cranston to make improvements to the wash-station and increase efficiencies at the 7 small farms in the collaborative

\$16,000 to Brown Family Seafood in West Kingston to change their distribution process to increase marketing, traceability and understanding for RI consumers about local seafood

\$10,000 to Garden Time to start an herb garden and gardening/healthy eating educational program at the Adult Correctional Institute's medium security facility in Cranston

\$5,000 to Jamestown Oyster Company for materials used to increase oyster harvest

\$9,975 to Katie Miller/Ben Torpey of Scratch Farm in Cranston to expand production and marketing capacity of Small State Seeds, a seed breeding project for chemical-free, RI-grown vegetable, herb and flower seeds

\$9,693 to Little City Growers Cooperative in Providence to expand sales, develop a unique brand and implement new marketing strategies and resources

\$13,648 to Newport Harbor Corporation in Newport to promote increased consumption of top neck clams, a locally harvested and under-utilized sea clam

\$13,480 to Red Planet Vegetable Farm in Johnston for farm improvements that will increase crop production and reduce labor costs while incorporating green energy into farm operations

\$10,000 to RI Mushroom Company in West Kingston for a second mushroom grow house to cultivate specialty mushrooms

\$7925 to RI Shellfisherman's Association to produce three PSAs highlighting commercial shellfishing and local shellfish available to RI consumers

\$11,000 to Sidewalk Ends Farm in Providence for farm equipment and cold storage system infrastructure to grow their business

\$16,400 to Snake Den Farm in Johnston for equipment to support the creation of a farmer/producer coop/community farm

\$7,500 to the Local Catch in Charlestown to increase the presence of RI seafood at RI farmers markets, increase Community Supported Fisheries (CSFs), improve brand awareness of RI-landed seafood and launch a web-based distribution channel

\$14,450 to Urban Greens Food Co-op in Providence to utilize professional design services for the layout of an urban retail grocer with a focus on equal access, sustainably-sourced and local food

\$19,840 for the Young Farmer Network to expand Young Farmer Nights programming, develop a Short Courses curriculum and to enhance outreach efforts

About Rhode Island Food Policy Council: The Rhode Island Food Policy Council (RIFPC) envisions a day when Rhode Island's food system will be a national model because of the strength of its local food system and its success at achieving community food security and optimal public health. The RIFPC's work will be coordinated by a statewide collaboration of diverse, committed and engaged stakeholders from all sectors of the food system. For more information visit www.rifoodcouncil.org.