



Building Food Systems Capacity in Central Appalachia

“Building Food Systems Capacity in Central Appalachia” is a project of the **Food & Ag Systems Working Group**, which aligns the grantmaking members of the **Appalachia Funders Network** and the practitioner organizations of the **Central Appalachian Network (CAN)**.

The project was funded through a 2015 grant from the **USDA Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI)**, whose \$250,000 investment was matched by existing funding commitments from regional funders. In four sub-regions across Appalachia, practitioner organizations implemented strategies that they co-designed with their funder partners (see table below). They also came together regionally through regular calls and periodic in-person convenings to share progress updates, best practices, and lessons learned from the work on the ground. By sharing strategies and tools across these sub-regions, we were able to accelerate our collective regional capacity around food systems development.

State/Sub-Region	Implementing Practitioner Organizations	Funder Partners (Strategy/Match)
East Kentucky	Community Farm Alliance	Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky
Southeast Ohio	Rural Action ACEnet Community Food Initiatives Live Healthy Appalachia	Osteopathic Heritage Foundation
West Virginia	Heart & Hand House Natural Capital Investment Fund	Benedum Foundation The One Foundation
NE Tennessee/ SW Virginia	Appalachian Sustainable Development Rural Resources Appalachian RC&D	East Tennessee Foundation USDA Rural Development Alleghany Foundation
Regional	Central Appalachian Network (CAN)	Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation Community Foundation of Western NC

Food System Capacity Improvements

- Farm to school/farm to institution training and coordination
- Business planning support for producers
- Season extension training and production planning
- Consumer education on nutrition and food preparation
- Connecting food pantries to local produce
- Place-based branding and marketing for local products
- Connecting local food actors to public health professionals
- Sub-regional strategic plans for the local food system

Over \$3 Million in Additional Investment Leveraged from the Following Sources

- USDA Local Food Promotion Program
- USDA Farm to School Program
- Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation
- Hearst Foundations
- Appalachian Regional Commission POWER Program
- Osteopathic Heritage Foundations
- USDA Beginning Farmer & Rancher Program

To learn more or get involved, contact lora@appalachianky.org or andrew@ruralsupportpartners.com