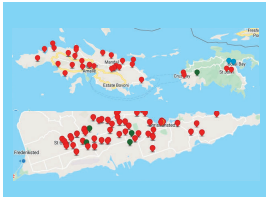




Virgin Islands Good Food Coalition Projects & Updates - January 2023

LARGE-SCALE PROJECTS IN THE WORKS



FoodFind VI, GIS-Mapping Project

includes mapping the geo-location and production/ facility data of all farms and food-related businesses in the USVI. Data collection and integration with VITEMA and disaster and emergency planning will be completed in 2023.

Partners - sponsored by USDA AMS Farmers Market Promotion Program; in partnership with the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands, UVI Research & Technology Park, the St. Croix Foundation, and the VI Department of Agriculture; and including collaborative work with Farm Credit Council, Iowa State University, and MarketMaker-US.

Budget:
\$233,185

Funding Gap:
\$101,210



VI Virtual Farmers Market

will be the first territory-wide online market that connects farmers to consumers and businesses, and increases equitable access to local food and online sales and markets. Mobile app will be customized for farmers' needs; beta version of online market will launch in late 2023.

Partners - sponsored by USDA AMS Farmers Market Promotion Program, and in partnership with the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands, UVI Research & Technology Park, the St. Croix Foundation, and the VI Department of Agriculture.

Budget:
\$617,025

Funding Gap:
\$250,000



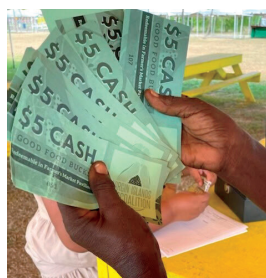
Technical Assistance to Farmers through Resources for Resilient Farms project

provides year-round, one-on-one technical assistance to farmers/producers in St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix to assist with applying for federal funding, build conservation awareness and practices, and increase the efficacy and impact of federal agriculture grant funding in the VI.

Partners - sponsored by USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service and in partnership with Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA (RAFI-USA).

Budget:
\$233,842

Funding Gap:
\$122,368



Good Food Bucks

is a nutrition incentive program that allows consumers to purchase locally-grown healthy food and value-added products sold at local farmers markets, farm stands, Farm Tiendas, and community food events that helps support behavioral changes to promote health equity and combat the alarming rate of non-communicable diseases in the VI.

Proposed Partners - Frederiksted Health Center, VI Department of Agriculture, VI Diabetes Center of Excellence, VI Housing Authority, We Grow Food Inc.

Budget:
\$236,750

Funding Gap:
\$236,750



Virgin Islands Good Food Coalition

Projects & Updates - January 2023

INTRODUCTIONS TO KEY PARTNERS

From February 16-20, 2023, three key partners will be on St. Croix and we would like to schedule a group meeting with your team to share information and help strategize on collaborative initiatives.

- **Iowa State University Cooperative Extension Service** has been a partner for over 5 years and has helped us produce: our Food System Assessment, the Farmer Disaster Checklist, and FoodFind VI.
- **MarketMaker** will be helping increase visibility and search-ability of our local food, farm and agrotourism activities through the National Farmers Market Platform and search engine. The geo-mapping and MarketMaker platform are both opportunities to support our bolstering agriculture in the territory.
- **Farm Credit Council** has been helping us create an action plan to create the appropriate level of lending structure that would allow for leverage of organizations like FFC and CDFI's to serve producers in food based businesses in a way that supports rural development and increases lending and credit portfolios. This aligns with the CDFI that is listed in Vision 2040.

MAJOR GRANTS IN PIPELINE WITH NEW PARTNERS

► **Regional Food Business Center (2023-2028)**

Partners: Hawaii Good Food Alliance, Alaska Food Policy Council, Alliance for Agriculture in Puerto Rico
VI Good Food Coalition is a key partner on a joint application to the USDA-Agricultural Marketing Service, Regional Food Business Center. Our application is unique in that it is most likely the first time rural remote areas and islands have sought to collaborate to receive funding. This initiative is led by the Hawaii Good Food Alliance (HGFA), with the Alaska Food Policy Council and VI Good Food Coalition as the other key partners.

The proposed Regional Food Business Center will create a central clearinghouse for financial support and value chain development resources for our isolated island populations that face uniquely complex challenges in our local and regional food economies, and this Center will help partners co-create the best practices needed to tackle these challenges. Additionally, the Centers will provide targeted support that builds resilience, sovereignty, and fairness into their local context.

► **Land Access Grant: Gaining New Ground for Underserved Farmers in Southeast US & US Caribbean Region (2023- 2028)**

Partner: Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA (RAFI-USA)

In partnership with RAFI-USA, we applied to USDA Land Access Grant Farm Service Agency for funding to improve land access and land security for underserved farmers of color in four areas: North Carolina, Florida, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. This will be accomplished by addressing core barriers to access land, credit, and markets, while also working to retain farmland by mitigating and preventing land loss. The project will work to meet the needs of underserved farmers on the edge of viability by delivering culturally-relevant outreach and education, providing targeted technical and financial assistance and examining and addressing barriers to accessing USDA programs in regions with significant populations of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) farmers, particularly those who are especially vulnerable to climate change impacts. The project will further work to improve land access by exploring the feasibility of establishing an agricultural land trust in the Caribbean region and bolstering an existing land trust in Puerto Rico.