

# EASTERN PLAINS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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## *Upcoming Grant Opportunities*

### **Value Added Producer Grant**

**Deadline May 2, 2022**

The VAPG program helps agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and marketing of new products. Goals of this program are to generate new products, create and expand marketing opportunities and increase producer income.

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-programs/value-added-producer-grants>

### **Community Development Block Grant Program**

**Deadline- June 15, 2022**

CDBG planning grants may be used for the preparation of plans, studies, training or research. Planning grants are available to eligible counties, cities, and towns. Local governments may apply on behalf of special purpose districts.

### **Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)**

**Deadline November 1, 2022**

The program provides guaranteed loan financing and grant funding to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy systems or to make energy efficiency improvements. Agricultural producers may also apply for new energy efficient equipment and new system loans for agricultural production and processing.

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs->



## **Plains to Porch Launch**

A new food subscription box is showcasing farmers and ranchers from Montana by delivering locally produced goods straight to subscribers. Through the Plains to Porch subscription box, consumers can sign up to have a box delivered quarterly that's filled with shelf-stable products grown from and raised in the fields of Montana. Each quarter the box will be curated to a different theme. The first quarter highlights snack products from savory Lentil Crunchers and Bison Bites to sweet cake bites and cookies.

Shortly after the launch in mid-March Governor Gianforte paid Dawson County a visit to learn more about the Plains to Porch box. During his time he met with producers of this box and in future boxes. Alissa Miller Food and Ag Development Specialist spoke with the Governor about the importance of promoting our ag producers and creating value added opportunities, allowing farmers and ranchers to diversify their operations.

A big part of our work is to strengthen local food systems, and we're hopeful that through Plains to Porch, more people will look for the producers in their area and consider buying local. As Plains to Porch gets off the ground and to your front door, we are excited to share many of Montana's amazing producers. On March 31st the EPEDC team shipped out the first orders to our subscribers. To order go to [plainstoporch.com](http://plainstoporch.com) or scan the QR code.



**“Despite the forecast, live like it's Spring”**

**-Lilly Pulitzer**

## CEDS Resiliency Plan

In early March EPEDC began gathering public input for the Resiliency Plan as part of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs). The CEDs are done every five years and assist in regional planning efforts for the five county region. The CEDs create an ongoing foundation for future economic planning and activity in the region, this involves the input of our City, County, local leaders and residents.

KLJ has been hired to conduct the Resiliency Plan for the CEDs and has held public input meetings and completed preliminary research at this point. Throughout the first week of March KLJ and EPEDC staff were in all five counties holding pop-up meetings at coffee shops, restaurants and breweries to find out what residents thought of their community. The information was gathered through conversations and a 12 questions survey. In addition to those pop-ups, meetings were held with city and county officials, local representatives, and community leaders, to offer further details for our different communities and varying opinions.

The survey was available to take for over a month in that time over 400 responses were given. That information will be utilized to inform EPEDC staff and KLJ in the creation of economic resiliency strategic plan in efforts of diversifying and stabilizing the economy of the EPEDC area.

The Economic Resiliency Strategic Plan will include an analysis of local economy and workforce, an inventory of the local economic development tools, evaluation of the region's

economic resiliency from both a steady-state and responsive perspective.

After the analysis of the surveys, data and region is completed, EPEDC staff will work with KLJ to create strategic goals and objectives to establish or enliven each economic resiliency identified for the region.

From there staff will work to prioritize goals and then set an implementation plan for each goal.

It is a priority of EPEDC that the goals identified will only be the ones that the community and regions have an appetite to implement. We will seek goals and objectives that promote economic development and opportunity, maximize effective development, uses the workforce consistent with other strategies, promotes the use of technology, balances resources, and obtains and utilizes adequate funds and other resources.

## OCC Legacy Receives ARPA Funding

OCC Legacy Cuts, owned and operated by Ty and Sarina O'Connor and is located in Ekalaka, received \$450,000 in ARPA funding with the help of EPEDC staff member Alissa Miller and FADC director Hailey Vine, to help in funding to expand their USDA/Certified Organic meat processing facility. OCC Legacy Cuts Processing Center will be eventually processing at least 75 head a week, with one day being dedicated strictly to organic processing. This adds a large number of openings for local ranchers and other organic producers as an outlet for their cattle to be processed.

Next Board Meeting  
July 20 , 2022

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Visit [epedc.com](http://epedc.com) for more information

The EPEDC serves the following counties and municipalities: Carter County, Dawson County, Fallon County, Prairie County and Wibaux County, as well as the Town of Ekalaka, the City of Baker, the City of Glendive, the Town of Plevna, the Town of Richey, the Town of Terry and the Town of Wibaux.