

Nebraska meat processors receive grants

(KLZA)-- Owners of dozens of small meat markets across Nebraska will be receiving funds in the first-round of the American Rescue Plan Act state grants.

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture announced a total of \$4.9 million in grants to 64 meat processing facilities across the state via the state's Independent Processor Assistance Program.

The [program was launched](#) this spring by the Nebraska Legislature and Gov. Pete Ricketts. It utilizes \$10 million of the state's \$1 billion allocation from the American Rescue Plan Act, a federal effort to jump-start an economy slowed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The program targets small meat processors with fewer than 25 employees and less than \$2.5 million in yearly sales — businesses that struggled to pick up the slack when processing at larger, corporate slaughtering facilities fell behind during the pandemic.

Steve Wellman, director of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, said the grants will help Nebraska livestock producers and meat processors strengthen the nation's food supply.

In total, the Ag Department will award approximately \$9.8 million in grants through the Independent Processor Assistance Program.

A second round of grants will be allocated in the first half of 2023, until funding is gone.

Previous recipients will be eligible to apply in subsequent rounds, but preference will be given to applications not awarded funding previously, a Ag Department spokeswoman said.

Area companies that are among the grant recipients are Den's Country Meats in Table Rock; Pelican's Meat in Johnson; Cornhusker Beef Company in Nebraska City and the Diller Locker in Diller, each receiving \$80 thousand grants.

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