

## **USDA Makes More Grants Available for Maine Meat and Poultry Processors**

### **Appendix: Meat Processing in Maine**

Maine is fortunate to have a state inspection program in addition to the USDA's program. There are 17 USDA-inspected processing facilities, preparing meat that may be sold in or out of state. There are 8 state-inspected facilities that are part of the [Maine Meat and Poultry Inspection Program](#) (MMPI), operated through a cooperative agreement with the USDA Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS). Meat from four of these state-inspected processors may be sold in-state only and are often utilized by smaller producers. Since 2018 Maine also has participated in the USDA's [Cooperative Interstate Shipping Program](#) (CIS), with four state-inspected processors approved for interstate products.

Despite these options, insufficient meat processing capacity is one of the most significant hurdles for Maine farmers. They face long waits for processing appointments, often must transport livestock significant distances, and have limited opportunities to introduce new products or expand their scale.

Thus far in 2023 Maine Rural Development has provided grants of \$315,150 to support meat processing expansion for multiple small processors. These grants were awarded through its [Value Added Producer Grant](#) and [Rural Business Development Grant](#) programs. This second phase of the [Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program](#) will provide grants to help eligible independent processors to expand their capacity. There were no Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program grants in Maine during the first phase of grant awards.

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