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**Over $2.7 Billion in USDA Funding Invested in Wisconsin Since 2021**

*Four-year report provides details of projects and program funding*

**STEVENS POINT, Wisc., Jan. 17. 2025** – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) [Rural Development Wisconsin](https://www.rd.usda.gov/wi) State Director Julie Lassa today, on her last day serving as a presidential appointee for the Biden-Harris Administration, announced the release of [USDA Rural Development Wisconsin Accomplishments](https://www.rd.usda.gov/media/file/download/wi-2021-2024investments-final.pdf) report. This report provides a comprehensive overview of Rural Development's investments across all program areas in rural Wisconsin since 2021.

“I’m proud of the more than **$2.7 billion** that Rural Development has invested in rural Wisconsin during this period,” said Lassa. “But beyond the numbers, these investments are about strengthening rural communities and improving the quality of life for the people who live there.”

Lassa continued, “I’m most proud of how this funding has helped to lower energy costs and increased job opportunities for farmers and rural businesses. We’ve helped improve the quality of drinking water and wastewater treatment and many of these investments helped improve access and the quality of healthcare and public safety services. In addition, we’ve increased access to affordable homeownership, repair and rental opportunities. The impact of this funding will create more energy independence, save money, and strengthen economic development for years to come in the communities of rural Wisconsin.”

To view a copy of the complete report, visit: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/media/file/download/wi-2021-2024investments-final.pdf>.

Highlights, include:

* A visit from USDA Under Secretary for Rural Development Dr. Basil Gooden in 2024 to tour the construction progress of a new 75,000-sqaure-foot critical access hospital in Darlington. Thanks to more than $55 million in loan and grant funding through Rural Development’s [Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant](https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program/wi) program, and a $5 million [Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan](https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities/community-facilities-guaranteed-loan-program/wi) in partnership with Compeer Financial, this state-of-the-art facility will expand healthcare services to meet the growing demand of Lafayette County and surrounding areas.
  + **Nearly $141 million** was invested through Rural Development’s [Community Facilities](https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities/community-facilities-guaranteed-loan-program/wi) programs since 2021 to build, buy, or improve infrastructure and equipment necessary to provide essential community services.
* Our 10-year partnership with St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity to help families access safe, affordable housing in Wisconsin led to local mother and healthcare worker and her two children break ground on their new home in Ellsworth in February 2024. This partnership has assisted at least 10 families in the area.
  + Since 2021, Rural Development has helped nearly 4,000 rural residents find affordable homeownership; more than 200 residents safely stay in their homes with affordable home repairs; and nearly 1,100 people with affordable rental housing. **These investments total nearly $770 million**.
* Several visits to ag producers across the state showed the state’s desire for creative and delicious food opportunities, including the expansion of apple ciders, Swiss pastries and more.
  + Rural Development’s [Value-Added Producer Grant](https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-programs/value-added-producer-grants/wi) program helps ag producers with financing to generate new products, create and expand marketing opportunities and increase producer income. This is one of many [Business and Cooperatives Programs](https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-programs) that support ag producers and rural small businesses across the nation, totaling investments of more than $368 million right here in Wisconsin – building stronger, more resilient communities and creating or saving nearly 400 jobs along the way.
* A record-breaking historical investment to Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC) in 2024 of $579 million in [Empowering Rural America (New ERA)](https://www.rd.usda.gov/empowering-rural-america-program-project-announcements) funding is helping to accelerate the clean energy transition across a wide footprint in rural Wisconsin. DPC also received $15.6 million in [Powering Affordable Clean Energy (PACE)](https://www.rd.usda.gov/powering-affordable-clean-energy-program-project-announcements) funding to finance the installation of two megawatts of solar photovoltaic generation at two sites, which will be connected to a 4-megawatt-hour battery energy storage system in western Wisconsin. This is enough electricity to power up to 1,000 homes.
  + Rural Development invested **more than $1 billion** in modern, clean electric infrastructure for rural Wisconsin communities, throughout the Biden-Harris Administration.
* Northwood Technical College received a [Distance Learning and Telemedicine](https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants) (DLT) grant to provide distance learning services to 38 project sites in Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Dodge, Douglas, Florence, Iron, Juneau, Marinette, Sawyer, St. Croix and Taylor counties.
* Edgerton Hospital and Health Services also received DLT funding to provide telemedicine services in Rock County. Total investments since 2021 through Rural Development’s [Telecommunications Programs](https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs) exceed $8 million.
* The city of Bloomer welcomed a visit from U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack in 2021 to discuss their much-needed $28 million project to replace all lead service lines, lead-jointed watermain pipes and sanitary sewer lines – reducing lead limits in their water distribution system, impacting more than 3,500 residents in Chippewa County.
  + Funding for projects like Bloomer’s are provided through Rural Development’s [Water and Environmental Programs](https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/water-environmental-programs) and total nearly $393 million since 2021.

Finally, the report also provides a progress update for the [**Rural Partners Network (RPN)** in Wisconsin](https://www.rural.gov/community-networks/wi). Our Community Liaisons help rural areas, within the five RPN Community Networks, find resources and funding to create jobs, build infrastructure and support their long-term economic stability.

“This work could not have been done without our rural partners and the dedicated support of Rural Development employees who remain committed to providing information and assistance with our programs and initiatives,” said Lassa.

Individuals with questions about this report or Rural Development programs, can [visit the agency’s website](https://www.rd.usda.gov/wi/wisconsin-contacts) for general and program-specific contact information.

As an appointee of President Biden, Wisconsin State Director Julie Lassa’s tenure ends with the transition to the new administration. Until the Trump administration appoints a new state director, please reach out to Deputy State Director Michelle Wallace with any questions. Here is contact information for Michelle:

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USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities, support jobs and improve the quality of life for millions of Americans in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and healthcare; and high-speed internet access in rural, Tribal and high-poverty areas. Visit the [Rural Data Gateway](https://www.rd.usda.gov/rural-data-gateway) to learn how and where these investments are impacting rural America.

To subscribe to USDA Rural Development updates in Wisconsin, visit [GovDelivery subscriber page](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDARD/subscriber/new?qsp=USDARD_1).

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