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State Representative Suzanne Ness

Ness Highlights Local Food Infrastructure Funding for Kane, McHenry Counties

EAST DUNDEE, Ill. – Improving support for small businesses including farms, processing facilities and food hubs across Kane and McHenry counties, state Rep. Suzanne Ness, D-East Dundee, is highlighting \$287,543 awarded through the Illinois Department of Agriculture's Local Food Infrastructure Grant Program to ensure fresh food remains accessible and affordable to residents.

“With costs continuing to rise, families across Illinois deserve peace of mind knowing that fresh, locally sourced food remains within reach. Tandemly, it’s so important that our local farms and other industry-related businesses have the support and resources needed to keep operations running for the millions of residents they serve,” said Ness.

Ness was integral to passing this year’s state budget, effectively allocating \$1.8 million to the Illinois Department of Agriculture’s Local Food Infrastructure Grant Program. This year, five grants were awarded to four local businesses in Ness’ district, which encompasses towns including Crystal Lake, East Dundee, Algonquin, Sleepy Hollow and Lake in the Hills, to improve infrastructure that will increase market access of Illinois agricultural projects to Illinois communities.

The following small businesses will receive funding:

- **Prairies Edge Garden, LLC** will receive \$1,959 to complete the installation of a walk-in cold storage facility on the farm.
- **Food for Greater Elgin, Inc.** will receive \$73,041 to purchase a refrigerated truck and delivery van to support its food pantry, the largest food pantry in Kane County.
- **Rustic Road Farm, LLC** will receive \$75,000 to construct an on-site cold storage and freezer facility to improve the farm’s efficiency.
- **Prairiesburg Fields, Inc.** will receive \$137,543 to increase freezer and dry storage capacity for Country Village Meats, as well as increasing general freezer capacity for processed meats.

“Local farmers and food hubs have had to face major hurdles lately, from illegal tariffs and climate impacts to rising operational costs that threaten small-scale sustainability. I’m thrilled to see these grant dollars invested directly in our community so our local families and businesses can keep flourishing,” said Ness.

Ness voted to create the Local Food Infrastructure Grant Act in 2024. Grants are eligible for Illinois businesses with 50 employees or less, including nonprofits and local governments. To learn more about the grant or to apply in the future, please visit agr.illinois.gov/assistance/grant-programs.

For more information, please contact info@repsnessil66.com or call 224-484-8620.

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