

Growing **ND** FROM WITHIN

MARCH 2026



Growing the next generation



My name is Ember, and I'm a 13-year-old who applied for and received the Youth Vendor Grant through NDFMGA in 2025. I started my own small business selling goat milk and Chevre, also known as goat cheese.

I thought I could use the money I earned showing livestock in 4-H to purchase dairy goats. I really wanted my own livestock to care for, but I wanted something with a purpose. La'Mancha goats fit all of my criteria. They are absolutely adorable and have rich, creamy milk with high production. The reason these goats stood out to me is because they naturally have no ears!

I pitched my idea to my mom, who was completely on board. We brainstormed ideas of what to do with the milk and how to convince my step-dad. Over a few weeks, we put together an in-depth business plan. I also made a PowerPoint presentation including all the benefits to our farm, family, and our customers. The biggest selling point was that they would browse caraganas, weeds, and other shrubs on our farm.

My parents were already attending the Minot Farmers Market as vendors, so tagging along with them, I'm learning the ropes of selling my products.

With the Youth Vendor Grant, I was able to purchase a mini fridge with a glass door to display my products safely. I also invested in bulk containers for my soft-spread cheeses. I would like to thank NDFMGA for this amazing opportunity to help me grow my business.

**NEW GRANT OPPORTUNITIES
CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 3**

Meet your NDFMGA Board Member Julia Seiler Northwest Representative

Julia is a grower from Williams County, involved in aspects of agriculture both large and small.

She and her husband own and operate Beard Farms as a diversified vegetable operation that sells at the local farmers markets. Julia has a B. S. in Biology and is an agronomist by trade in the Yellowstone River Valley specializing in irrigated cropping systems.

Julia is also a certified master gardener through NDSU and continues participation with the program through public outreach. Through networking and community involvement, Julia is hopeful to gauge the interest of the local community in supporting local food systems and producers in western ND.



NDFMGA elects new president

Hello NDFMGA Members and Friends.

I am pleased to introduce myself as your newly elected president. My involvement with NDFMGA over the past five years has been a great experience, allowing me to witness firsthand the impact this organization has in North Dakota.



Quinn Renfandt
NDFMGA President

My goal is to continue the work that began many years ago by previous leaders, strengthening the foundation of our association.

We have the opportunity to create a path forward that will generate mutual benefits for all members. This doesn't come easy and will require participation and feedback from all stakeholders. My request, over the coming months, is for all of you to reach out to your fellow board members and engage with your communities.

Ask questions, share your opinions, and help us understand your needs. NDFMGA exists to serve you, the people who work hard every day, all year long. Farmers, makers, community leaders, and entrepreneurs of all ages are crucial to the ecosystems of North Dakota's farmers market scene. I wish everyone the best in this upcoming season.

See you at the market.

Quinn Renfandt
President - NDFMGA

Getting everyone involved at the Wilton Farmers Market!



Something for all ages at the Grafton Farmers Market!



Grocery and Food Hub initiative funded

Across north central North Dakota, a group of rural grocers, farmers, ranchers, and community partners are exploring a new way to strengthen local food access and support rural businesses.

Through a \$12.6 million, seven-year grant from the Bush Foundation, the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) Rural Development Center is leading the North Central Regional Grocery and Local Food Hub Initiative. The project is focused on improving access to fresh, affordable food while expanding market opportunities for local producers.

The effort is exploring two connected opportunities. One focuses on helping independent rural grocers collaborate on purchasing and distribution to reduce wholesale costs and strengthen store viability. The second explores development of a regional food hub that could aggregate, store, and distribute locally produced foods—helping farmers and ranchers reach wholesale markets such as grocery stores, schools, restaurants, and other institutional facilities.

Committees of local grocers, produce growers, and meat producers/processors are helping shape what this could look like

in practice. Listening sessions, educational workshops, and site visits to successful food hubs are underway as part of the learning process.

Participation in these discussions does not require commitment; the goal now is to explore possibilities, identify barriers, and determine whether a model can be developed that works for producers, retailers, and rural communities alike.

More information can be found at: <https://www.ndarec.com/rural-food-access>.

Local Food, Big Business: Measuring North Dakota's Homegrown Economy

New statewide study now open

NDFMGA is supporting a statewide study to measure the economic contribution of local food across North Dakota.

North Dakota's local food economy is growing, but much of that activity disappears in the datasets used for planning and funding decisions.



Board members, grants, useful information, contact information....



All kinds of information at the NDFMGA website



<https://www.ndfarmersmarkets.org>

Help make local food visible by participating in the study. Survey invitations will be sent by the NDSU research team via a secure link. Learn what it is, why it matters, and how confidentiality is handled in Felicity Merritt's blog post: <https://www.farrms.org/producersperspective/making-the-invisible-visible>.

2026 NDFMGA Grant Opportunities

The North Dakota Farmers Market and Growers Association (NDFMGA) is committed to strengthening the state's local food system by providing direct financial support to those who power it.

Recognizing that the transition from grower to vendor—or from a community idea to a thriving farmers market—requires more than just hard work, the NDFMGA offers a suite of exclusive grant opportunities.

These programs are designed to lower the barriers to entry, professionalize local operations, and cultivate the next generation of agricultural leaders.

Summary of the available grant opportunities:

- Farmers Market Development Grant (\$2,000): A comprehensive "startup" fund for new or expanding markets. It supports essential administrative costs, such as

Keith Knudson, Executive Director

Why should I join the ND Farmers Market and Growers Association?

If you care about fresh food, local farms, and strong community, the North Dakota Farmers Market and Growers Association (NDFMGA) is an organization designed to support you. Our statewide nonprofit works to strengthen farmers markets and direct-to-consumer sales, helping growers, vendors, and market managers succeed while making local food more accessible.

NDFMGA supports farmers and producers who sell directly to customers. Whether you grow fruits and vegetables, produce meat, milk products, eggs, and honey, baked goods, create handmade products, or offer value-added foods, the association provides tools to help you thrive. Our mission is simple but powerful: when local producers succeed, entire communities benefit.

One advantage is access to resources and education. The organization offers helpful guides, templates, and marketing tools. From food safety tips, branding advice, and promotional strategies, we provide support for experienced and new vendors. If you're new to selling at

state filings and legal requirements, as well as branding, marketing events, and stipends to compensate market managers for their organizational efforts.

- Farm to Institution Grant (\$1,500): Tailored for producers in their first two years of expanding into wholesale markets such as schools, hospitals, or restaurants. This grant provides funding for food safety planning, professional packaging, and institutional marketing. (Deadline: May 15).

- Farmers Market Mini-Grant (\$500): Aimed at established markets and individual members to boost visibility. These funds are used for localized advertising, high-quality signage, and social media campaigns that benefit the broader community and promote North Dakota products.

- New Vendor Grant (\$600): Specifically for producers in their first or second year of selling at a market. This grant

helps offset the cost of essential vending infrastructure, including weather-proof canopies, tables, scales, and other booth items.

- Youth Group Gardening Grant (\$500): Available to organizations working with youth (ages 1–19) to establish or maintain edible gardens. The funds cover the "ground-up" costs of production, including seeds, tools, and educational materials. (Deadline: August 1).

- Youth Vendor Grant (\$300): A specialized program for young entrepreneurs (ages 10–18) looking to start their own market business. It provides the initial capital needed for supplies and marketing materials to help them launch successfully. (Deadline: August 1).

All grant recipients must be active NDFMGA members and are required to submit a final report, including receipts and photos, by the Nov. 30 deadline.



Keith Knudson
Executive Director

farmers markets, you'll find clear guidance to help you confidently take that first step.

NDFMGA builds connections through newsletters, updates, and a statewide directory

of markets with the North Dakota Department of Agriculture. Discover new selling opportunities, stay updated on events, and network with others who share your passion for local food. It's more than information — it's community.

NDFMGA offers grant programs that can help cover marketing materials, support youth entrepreneurs, or assist vendors launching a business. This type of financial support makes participating in a market more achievable. The organization also encourages partnerships with schools

and community groups, expanding opportunities for producers beyond traditional market settings.

If you're interested in starting or improving a farmers market, NDFMGA provides guidance for success. We help communities create welcoming, well-organized markets that bring people together.

Perhaps most exciting is the spirit of collaboration NDFMGA fosters. Through workshops, webinars, and shared learning opportunities, vendors and market managers can grow their skills and share ideas. You're not navigating the local food world alone — you're part of a supportive statewide network.

The North Dakota Farmers Market and Growers Association is more than a resource hub. It's a partner in growth, a champion for local agriculture, and a connector of communities. Join the association, get involved, and be part of cultivating a stronger, more vibrant local food future across North Dakota.



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

**NORTH DAKOTA FARMER MARKET
AND GROWERS ASSOCIATION**

10191 Lake Road
Bottineau, North Dakota 58318

Help Us Grow More Than Local Food

There is nothing quite like a fresh newsletter in your hands, but as our community grows to **over 800 members**, so does the cost of reaching you. It currently costs about \$2 per person to print and mail every issue.

That's roughly \$1,600 per quarter that could potentially be redirected toward supporting our members, funding development grants, and strengthening our statewide market network.

The Choice is Yours

We want to offer you a **100% voluntary** digital option. You can help us save thousands of dollars annually by switching to a crisp, high-resolution PDF delivered straight to your inbox.

Go Digital: Get the news faster, in full color, and help us reinvest in our mission. *Room for more information.*

Stay Paper: If you love the physical copy, don't worry! We are happy to keep mailing it to you.

Simply let us know your preference:

Scan the QR Code or email us at
NDFMGA@Outlook.com



NEW Swap and Shop corner

Farms change hands. Young farmers need equipment. Sometimes a person has to downsize. There's opportunity in the changing of the guard. As farmers age and relocate, what happens to the equipment and tools no longer needed?

Well, here's an opportunity to buy, sell or trade farm equipment. Using our new Swap and Shop, you can sell, search, or buy as a benefit to our membership. If you are old enough you will recall that this was a common practice back in the day.

Ads will be screened for appropriate items and printed at the discretion of the board. Simply email NDFMGA@outlook.com with your copy and a clear photo of what you have for sale or trade. Include as much info as possible knowing the copy may have to be edited for space.

FOR SALE: Check out these listings on **BisManOnline.com**

- [European walk-behind G110 Tractor with Honda GX390 13HP engine. Harrow. 44 hours.](#)
- [Double Wheel Hoe - Used one season](#)
- [TORO TILLER: Purchased from Ace Hardware in October 2023. Used about three times.](#)