

USDA To Fund Farm Labor Housing

Written by USDA

Tuesday, 22 July 2014 19:02 - Last Updated Tuesday, 22 July 2014 19:09



Funds Build Safe, Affordable Housing for Farm Workers.

WASHINGTON – Agriculture Acting Under Secretary Doug O'Brien has announced the availability of more than \$33 million to provide safe and affordable housing for farmworkers and their families through the [Farm Labor Housing Program](#). Through this program, loans and grants are provided to farmers, farmers associations, family farm corporations, Indian tribes, non-profit organizations, public agencies and farmworker associations to develop or improve multi-family housing facilities for farmworkers and their families. Funds also can be used to build, repair or improve adjoining facilities such as playgrounds, spaces for child care, computer rooms and community centers.

"USDA's Farm Labor Housing Program is the only national source of construction funds available to buy, build or improve housing for farmworkers," O'Brien said. "This important funding will help farm laborers – and especially seasonal, migrant workers, who play such a vital role in America's agricultural industry – gain access to safe, affordable housing."

Nearly \$24 million in loans, \$8 million in grants and \$1.5 million in rental assistance is available through today's announcement.

Applications for Farm Labor Housing assistance are due to the Rural Development state office on September 2. More information about how to apply is available on page 37274 in the July 1, 2014 [Federal Register](#), or by contacting any USDA Rural Development [state office](#).

Since 2009, the Obama Administration has provided more than \$164 million in Farm Labor Housing assistance to construct or renovate more than 4,300 apartments for farmworkers and their families.

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For example, in 2010 USDA awarded \$3 million in loans and grants to the Everglades Community Association to help build 30 apartments. Migrant farm laborers who travel to North Carolina, Ohio or other farming areas can now obtain safe, decent rental housing when they return to south Florida. The Rental Assistance that accompanied Rural Development's investment ensures the newly constructed townhouses remain affordable to workers earning modest farm wages in an otherwise urban/suburban market. In fiscal year 2013, Rural Development provided nearly \$150,000 in rental assistance for the Everglades Community Association's migrant housing program.

The 30 apartments USDA helped finance are part of a landscaped, 120-acre campus that includes a community center, child care and after-school programs, a health clinic, retail space, a credit union and a 10-acre park with sports fields.

President Obama's plan for rural America has brought about historic investment and resulted in stronger rural communities. Under the President's leadership, these investments in housing, community facilities, businesses and infrastructure have empowered rural America to continue leading the way – strengthening America's economy, small towns and rural communities.

USDA's investments in rural communities support the rural way of life that stands as the backbone of our American values. President Obama and Agriculture Secretary Vilsack are committed to a smarter use of federal resources to foster sustainable economic prosperity and ensure the government is a strong partner for businesses, entrepreneurs and working families in rural communities.

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