

BUNCOMBE COUNTY COVID RECOVERY FUNDING

Project Spotlight



To promote a strong and equitable recovery from COVID-19 and its negative economic impacts, Buncombe County invested federal funds into projects like this one.

Project	Building Capacity for Buncombe County Food Entrepreneurs
Lead Organization	Center for Agricultural and Food Entrepreneurship
Award Amount	\$200,000
Project Dates	October 2021 – September 2023
Impact Area	Business Incubators and Start-Up or Expansion Assistance

How the Funds Were Used

The Center for Agricultural and Food Entrepreneurship (CAFE) utilized grant funds to support small businesses in Buncombe County including food manufacturers, caterers, food truck operators and farmers seeking to add value to their agricultural production. Project activities that supported CAFE clients included providing technical services at no cost to assess needs, arranging free training, coordinating production time and commissary access in FDA-inspected kitchens, equipping commercial kitchens with needed equipment, providing multi-lingual access to services, and operating Blue Ridge Food Ventures with a focus on growth sustainability for creating jobs and income. CAFE exceeded performance expectations by servicing 76 local businesses and helping to create 54 full-time and 122 part-time jobs in the community. The project also supported clients in retaining 115 full-time and 165 part-time jobs.

Results

- **76** businesses enrolled
- **54** full-time jobs created
- **115** full-time jobs retained
- **122** part-time jobs created
- **165** part-time jobs retained



"Because of this funding support, our facility was able to purchase and install equipment critical to client operations, allowing them to increase production volume while lowering their overhead, resulting in increased income and viability for their businesses. Support for facility salaries and other operational costs allowed the facility to bank earned revenues from client productions to further sustain facility operations, allowing us to continue serving food, beverage and natural product entrepreneurs in WNC."

- **Michael McDonald, General Manager
Blue Ridge Food Ventures,
CAFE's parent organization**

For a complete listing of Buncombe County's American Rescue Plan Act Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund investments, visit www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding