

Rio Grande Colonias Regional Food Business Center – Technical Assistance Categories

Category	Definition	Examples
Assistance with Award Management		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility requirements for grants • Eligible vs ineligible expenses • Compliance with reporting requirements • Performance evaluation metrics • Record-keeping and reporting TA
Assistance with Farming Operations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific Ag needs; POST-harvest • Capacity planning/expanding operations • Land management/stewardship • Supply chain issues/sourcing • Access to labor (decrease in workforce)* • Access to farming resources (land / water, other inputs) * • Planning for environmental sustainability • On-Farm technical assistance/advising • Farm technical training • Small-scale and Beginning farmer TA and training
Product Development Assistance	Guidance on recipe formulation, food science expertise, and assistance with product testing and refinement to ensure quality, safety, and taste consistency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product development assistance
Food Processing and Production	Support with identifying suitable production facilities, equipment selection, layout design, and compliance with food safety regulations (e.g., Good Manufacturing Practices).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input resource management; efficiency/BMPs/sustainability • Food Safety, Post Harvest and HGAP/GAP certification TA • Value-Added, Commercial Kitchen TA (in process) • Food processing and production
Packaging and Labeling Compliance	Assistance with designing packaging that preserves product quality, meets regulatory requirements, and effectively communicates product attributes and nutritional information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Packaging and labeling compliance
Supply Chain Management	Guidance on sourcing ingredients, establishing relationships with suppliers, managing inventory, and optimizing logistics for efficient production and distribution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply chain management

Market Research and Analysis	Assistance with identifying target markets, understanding consumer preferences and trends, conducting competitive analysis, and developing a market entry strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market research and analysis
Branding & Marketing	Support with developing a brand identity, packaging design, marketing materials, and strategies for building brand awareness and reaching target customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm to Institution Aggregation and Marketing TA • Branding and marketing • Frozen, Refrigerated and shelf stable value-added food products
Sales and Distribution Channels	Assistance with identifying sales channels (e.g., retail, e-commerce, foodservice), negotiating contracts with distributors or retailers, and developing a sales strategy to drive growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales and distribution channels
Regulatory Compliance	Guidance on navigating food safety regulations, labeling requirements, permits, and certifications (e.g., USDA Organic, FDA registration) to ensure compliance and minimize legal risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General - Permits, Inspections, & Certifications * • Writing a Business Plan • Writing a Grant Proposal • Accounting / Preparing financial statements • Alternative sources of funding? ...other than BB • Farm business planning; production budgets • Business development
Technical Training and Education	Access to workshops, seminars, and online courses covering topics such as food safety, quality assurance, marketing, and business management tailored to the needs of value-added food businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical training and education
Networking and Mentorship	Opportunities to connect with industry experts, experienced entrepreneurs, and mentors who can provide guidance, advice, and support throughout the startup journey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking and mentorship
Specialized TA		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to start a farming Co-Op • Making Value-Added Products • USDA Organic Certification