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PRESS RELEASE

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CDFA Announces Strategic Food Systems Financing Plan with Southeast Nebraska Development District (SENDD)

—Leveraging Development Finance for Regional Food Systems —

Columbus, OH — The Council of Development Finance Agencies (CDFA) and Southeast Nebraska Development District (SENDD) are excited to announce the achievement of a strategic food systems financing plan for the southeastern Nebraska region's food system. This is the first strategic food systems financing plan created for SENDD that focuses on how the region can use traditional development finance tools to meet the infrastructure and capital needs of food and agriculture-related small businesses to generate economic prosperity while advancing racial and social equity.

"CDFA is very thankful to have support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation as we launch this important work dedicated to exploring how local food systems can be brought into coordination with public finance," states Toby Rittner, DFCP and President & CEO of CDFA. "Throughout the last year, CDFA has worked in collaboration with SENDD to identify opportunities for using new and existing traditional financing approaches to further support Southeast Nebraska's food systems development."

CDFA's recommendations for SENDD are informed by background research — demographics, geography, and economic development activities across the region — along with stakeholder interviews and a two-day strategic planning process. These recommendations work together to help SENDD better support access to financing for food and agriculture-related businesses in the region.

"SENDD is continuously looking at ways to expand our member services to our communities and counties. When we were approached by CDFA on partnering with them to develop a strategic food systems financing plan for our region, it was a no brainer," states Tom Bliss, Executive Director of SENDD. "We are beyond grateful to CDFA and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for their investment in preparing this plan that we will use to better serve our area and strengthen our food system initiatives."

In November, CDFA will be hosting a webinar "Restoring Local Food Systems Through Finance" as part of the Food Systems Finance Webinar Series. This webinar will illustrate the Reframe, Build, Plan framework which outlines three key success factors to expand financing and drive capital into local and regional food systems. We will highlight SENDD's success in using this approach, give an update on the progress in implementing the strategic plan, and facilitating investment in the regional food system.

With funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, CDFA has been researching how development finance agencies can become more engaged in developing local and regional food systems. CDFA aims to advance opportunities and leverage existing financing streams to scale local and regional food systems by increasing access to healthy foods and creating new living wage jobs in communities across the country. For those interested in getting engaged in CDFA's efforts to unlock capital for communities of color and advance economic justice in the development finance industry, please contact CDFA.

The **Council of Development Finance Agencies** is a national association dedicated to the advancement of development finance concerns and interests. CDFA is comprised of the nation's leading and most knowledgeable members of the development finance community representing public, private and non-profit entities alike. For more information about CDFA, visit www.cdfa.net.

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