

MARBIDCO & SMADC Help Southern Maryland Meat Processor with Funding to Make Facility Improvements and Enhance Local Processing Needs

MARBIDCO helps with demand for enhanced and expanded livestock processing facilities in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's, and St. Mary's Counties.



MARBIDCO partnered with the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC), which is a division of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, to enhance local livestock processing capabilities in support of livestock producers in Southern Maryland.

After more than 10 years of intermittent progress in establishing local meat processing facilities, farmers in Southern Maryland will have access to a USDA-inspected meat processing facility for post-slaughter operations right in their area. Stauffer's Butcher Barn, located in Mechanicsville, St. Mary's County, has received the inaugural funding package from the Southern Maryland Livestock Processing Revolving Loan Fund, a collaborative effort between SMADC and MARBIDCO, including both loan and grant funds.

The funding includes a \$200,000 grant and a \$250,000 loan with options for partial loan forgiveness. These monies will assist the Stauffer family in purchasing equipment and enhancing their custom-exempt facility to achieve USDA certification, thereby enabling local livestock producers to obtain retail cuts of their meat without enduring lengthy drives to processing facilities.

Currently, farmers in Southern Maryland haul animals to northern Maryland, the Eastern Shore, or across state lines, devoting hours to a single trip.

This new MARBIDCO regional loan program provided a loan of \$250,000 with a fixed interest rate of just 4.50%. As an incentive for borrowers who maintain good repayment standing, the loan features partial debt forgiveness, equivalent to 25% of the amortizing loan payments made near the end of the loan term.

Stauffer's Butcher Barn presently provides custom exempt processing services for beef, hogs, sheep, and goats. The improvements being made at this facility will enable the sale of USDA-approved retail meat to customers in the future.

The business plans to maintain the custom processing segment of its operations while also introducing retail processing for both intact and non-intact meats, in addition to specialty items like sausages and smoked meats.

MARBIDCO also helped the Stauffer family with two additional Livestock Equipment Grants for \$20,000 each during FY 2025.

Supporting the livestock processing sector is a key aspect of MARBIDCO's agricultural development mission. MARBIDCO administers two other financing initiatives aimed at improving livestock processing capacity throughout the State, including a Livestock Processing Loan program (to target support to large animal slaughter and blue catfish processing facilities), as well as the more flexible Livestock Processing Equipment Grant program, that are available statewide.