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Colorado Big Country Assists Local Entrepreneur with Business Planning for USDA-inspected Slaughter Facility

In late 2010, Colorado Big Country RC&D Council, Inc. (CBC) of Glenwood Springs, Colorado, provided support to study the feasibility of expanding a wild game processing facility in the City of Rife, Colorado. The development would assist a local entrepreneur to expand his current business by branching out into value-added meat product sales, including specialty meats.

The business owner, Mr. Kim Antonelli, utilized support from CBC to hire an agriculture economist to study the feasibility of the proposed expansion. This effort would help meet the need for livestock slaughter and processing facilities in the region. It will have the added benefits of business expansion, job creation, and production of value-added products for sale in regional and national markets.

The existing facility is not certified as a USDA-inspected facility. Expansion would require relocation of the existing business to a larger building in Rifle, as well as upgrading the existing processing equipment to meet USDA requirements.

The feasibility study proved to Mr. Antonelli that the proposed expansion would have the potential for profitability, and would support several skilled laborer positions. The study was completed by Dr. Julie Schifflet, Ph.D., a private contractor who specializes in livestock business development. She runs her consulting business from her home in nearby Collbran, Colorado.

Funding for the feasibility study was secured by CBC from the USDA agency, Rural Development. CBC applied for and received a grant through Rural Development's "Rural Business Enterprise Grant" program.

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