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Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham
Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes
Deputy Secretary Jon Clark

State Awards Grant to Support Family Meat Processing Business

C4 Ranch wants to provide local service to hunters

TIERRA AMARILLA, N.M. - A family ranch and livestock business in Rio Arriba County that hopes to expand its direct to consumer business by processing its own meat products while also offering services to area hunters is set to receive an assistance grant from the state Economic Development Department.

C4 Enterprises, Inc. was established as a Chama feed and farm supply store business in 2013 by Tommy Casados and his father Anthony Casados. The business name is the same as the family's cattle brand and derives from the fact that Tommy is part of the 4th generation to be living on a ranch shared by his grandpa and two great uncles, while leasing and operating neighboring ranches in Tierra Amarilla.

The state has pledged \$75,000 from its closing fund under the Local Economic Development (LEDA) Act so C4 can begin construction on a butcher shop and meat-processing facility to be operational in time for the fall hunting season.

"This investment serves as a prime example of our proactive efforts in helping small businesses, rural communities and local economic development," Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham said. "I have every confidence we will revitalize rural communities around this state by supporting homegrown businesses."

"We are honored to partner with the Casados family so they can develop their ranch land, provide a service to area hunters, and create jobs in Rio Arriba County," added Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes of the Economic Development Department. "This is home-grown rural economic development."

The family expects to invest almost \$400,000 in the project in the coming year and hire 8 full-time employees by 2023, including two butchers, a meat processor and a sales and marketing director. It will invest \$136,000 on equipment and another \$234,000 on construction, which includes plumbing, water, electrical, septic and an outdoor wood furnace.

"Our goal is to someday be on the plate of almost every New Mexican who wants real grass-fed beef raised right here in New Mexico. We want to deliver directly to the

consumer,” said Tommy Casados.

Casados said it costs \$1,200 per animal to process meat in Colorado and the state grant "will be great for young people who want to work in agriculture and want to be able to do it here. It will keep our local community thriving."

The family processed 13,000 pounds of beef in Colorado last year from its own ranch. But the demand for processing facilities from area hunters is such that the family wants to grow its enterprise locally. Some 2,500 elk and deer are harvested annually at ranches, game parks and the Jicarilla Apache Reservation.

C4 Enterprises expects to generate income from sausage, jerky, aged and cured meats, as well as the custom processing of livestock and wild game. It sells its products at area farmers' markets and hopes to develop an on-line sales footprint.

Val Alonzo, executive director of the Regional Development Corp., said the C4 project is a great example of collaboration. It was identified as part of the organization's outreach, which involved bringing in assistance from the county and the state.

"C4 Enterprises is a great example of what can be done in New Mexico to help hard working and motivated business owners when private and governmental organizations work together," said Alonzo.

"It's wonderful how the Casados family has evolved their tradition of ranching into value-added product that will create needed jobs in our community," said Rio Arriba County Commission Chair Danny Garcia.

"We are pleased that our County Economic Development Department along with the Regional Development Corporation have been lending support to businesses in our more rural areas and knew to reach out to the State Economic Development Department to make this opportunity come about. "

State LEDA grants are contingent on the company meeting application guidelines and employment benchmarks.

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For more information on the farm go to c4farms.com or Facebook, [c4farmsgrassfedbeef](https://www.facebook.com/c4farmsgrassfedbeef).

[Photo 1 - Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes](#) of the state Economic Development Department walks a section of the C4 Ranch in Tierra Amarilla, N.M. that will be home to a new meat processing facility.

[Photo 2 - Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes](#) of the New Mexico Economic Development Department announces a \$75,000 economic assistance grant to a ranch family in Rio Arriba County that will open a meat processing facility.

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