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Grant for Navajo Agricultural Enterprise Is Approved

Interior Assistant Secretary Ken Smith has approved an economic development grant of \$358,666 to a Navajo tribal enterprise for the expansion of a potato production and processing business

The grant is part of a Bureau of Indian Affairs program to provide "seed money" for the development of profit-making enterprises on Indian reservations. At least 75 percent of the project funds must come from non-federal sources.

The project of the Navajo Agricultural Products Industry (NAPI) will cost approximately \$1.5 million. It will provide additional potato storage facilities, a fresh-pack facility and related equipment. Financing for the project, in addition to the grant, will come from a \$700,000 bank loan and the contribution of equipment by NAPI.

The fresh-pack line will allow NAPI to sort and package potatoes into sizes and grades for specific markets to realize a maximum financial return. Management anticipates that the fresh-pack operations will provide 25-35 additional job opportunities on the reservation.

Grants to eight other tribes have been approved by the Assistant Secretary and other applications are being reviewed. The program, initiated this year, received an appropriation of \$5 million for 1983.

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