



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – December 16, 2016**

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Lane County Economic Development, Lane Workforce Partnership, and the Cities of Eugene and Springfield have awarded the Neighborhood Economic Development Corporation (NEDCO) with a \$45,000 grant. The funds come from the Regional Entrepreneurial Training Fund which was established to:

- Enhance training availability for start-up businesses and entrepreneurs
- Develop innovation skills needed to critically evaluate ideas
- Build essential skills to act upon innovative ideas

NEDCO is partnering with Springfield High School to develop a new Entrepreneurship Career and Technical Education (CTE) track focused on the food and beverage industry. The program, Youth Food Innovators, will expand options for youth, create better education outcomes, encourage future generations of business startup, improve workforce preparedness, and align with the economic development strategy for Lane County. The year-long curriculum will help students design, test, produce, package, market, and sell a food product. The program will be based at NEDCO's Sprout Regional Food Hub and aligned with existing CTE programs and local economic development strategies. The end result will be a replicable entrepreneurship curriculum and certification program that can then be shared with any interested school.