



STATE OF DELAWARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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SECRETARY

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July 1, 2009

Dear Specialty Crop Producer or Affiliated Person:

The Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA) announces the 2009 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program to fund projects that solely enhances the competitiveness of Specialty Crops. The Specialty Crop Block Grant Program was established in the 2008 Farm Bill.

DDA has established a competitive grant process to award these federal funds in 2009. The Department will be administering funds totaling \$225,990 for the development of projects that will benefit existing specialty crop producers. Grants will be issued from \$5,000 to \$40,000. DDA will fund projects that can produce the highest degree of measureable benefits to Delaware's specialty crop producers.

DDA is seeking applications from producers, non-profit organizations, government entities, for profit organizations and universities for projects that aim to promote or enhance the production of and access to Delaware specialty crops. Collaboration between these groups will be considered in a positive fashion. An industry based review team will rank the applications for final decision by the Delaware Secretary of Agriculture. Applicants must reside or their business or educational affiliation must be in Delaware.

In the past, the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program has been dedicated to specialty food crops only. This year the U.S. Department of Agriculture has defined specialty crops as fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops. Visit www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0 for a comprehensive list of eligible specialty crops.

Both the paper copies and the electronic copy of the grant applications must be received by 5:00p.m. on Monday, August 3, 2009. For questions about the grant application, please contact Jo-Ann Walston at (302)698-4523, or contact me at (302)698-4501. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ed Kee".

Ed Kee
Secretary



Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – Farm Bill

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

**Grant Proposal Due Date
August 3, 2009**

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – Farm Bill
Request for Proposal

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Timeline	1
Program Description	1
Eligibility	1
Funding.....	2
Funding Priorities	2
Review Process and Criteria	3
Grant Awards	4
Reporting Requirements	5
Application Requirements	5
Application Format	6
Application Due Date	7
Attachment A – Application	8
Attachment B – Proposed Budget	9
Attachment C – Definition of Specialty Crops.....	10
Attachment D – General Terms and Conditions	12

Timeline

Week of July 1	Release of Request for Proposals
August 3	Grant Proposals Due to DDA
October/November	Announcement & Award Grant Agreements

Program Description

The Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA) is pleased to announce a competitive solicitation process to award Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – Farm Bill (SCBGP-FB) funds for projects that enhance the competitiveness of Delaware’s specialty crop industry. Projects should benefit the specialty crop industry as a whole and be able to provide positive impact and measurable outcomes.

Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 and authorized the USDA to provide grants to States for each of the fiscal years 2008 through 2012 to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. These grants are to be utilized by state departments of agriculture solely to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

Specialty crops are defined by USDA as fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and horticulture and nursery crops (including floriculture). Please see Attachment C for a comprehensive list of eligible specialty crops and ineligible commodities under the SCBGP.

Applications for grant funds should show how the project potentially impacts and produces measurable outcomes for the specialty crop industry and/or the public rather than a single organization, institution, or individual. Grant funds will not be awarded for projects that solely benefit a particular commercial product or provide a profit to a single organization, institution, or individual. Single organizations, institutions, and individuals are encouraged to participate as project partners.

Applicants must be a legal entity and have the legal capacity to contract.

Eligibility

This invitation for proposals has been developed to provide all interested parties an opportunity to apply for these funds. Individual producers, producer groups, organizations, and associations, as well as state and local organizations, academia and other specialty crops stakeholders are eligible to apply either as single entities or in combined efforts. Proposals submitted by individual producers must demonstrate that the potential impact of the project will accrue to a broader group of similar producers, region or industry segment. Applicants may submit more than one proposal. If more than one proposal is submitted, please prioritize the submissions.

According to USDA guidelines, grant funds cannot be awarded for projects that solely benefit a particular commercial product or provide a profit to a single organization, institution, or individual because these projects do not enhance the specialty crop industry's competitiveness.

Applicants must also be able to administer funds according to federal requirements. Visit the USDA website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5075989> for requirements.

In order to be eligible to participate, applicants must reside or their business or educational affiliation must be in Delaware. Those applicants that are non-profit or for-profit, if awarded a grant, will be required to provide verification of their status.

Funding

Funding Levels: DDA is eligible to receive \$225,990.32 to award grants from \$5,000 to \$40,000 per project in Delaware.

Matching Funds and In-Kind Contributions: Matching funds are not required; however, we consider the levels and sources of matching funds to be a key criteria for evaluating proposals. We want to make the best use of available resources and will give preference to proposals that demonstrate applicant commitment to the project in terms of cash contribution and that maximize the leveraging of funds.

Indirect Costs: Indirect costs are not allowed.

Project Duration: Projects must be completed within two calendar years and no extensions will be permitted.

Funding Priorities

Funding Priorities for Specialty Crop Block Grant Program funds include, but is not limited to, the following activities:

Research and Extension: Crop production, harvesting, post harvest handling; new variety evaluation and development, varieties for pest resistance, varieties adapted to Delaware or adapted to certain environments; insect, disease, and weed management; invasive plant/pest control; water management; pollination; applied research/on farm tests, enterprise budget analysis, reducing production input costs.

Marketing: Promoting specialty crops; developing new and existing markets focusing on consumers, retail, foodservice, institutions, and processors; consumer/buyer awareness/education; new product development; marketing/economic surveys.

Food Safety: Good Agricultural Practices/Good Handling Practices (GAP/GHP) education, training, auditing, traceability, crisis management, developing GAP standards, risk analysis, certification programs, cost share programs for GAP and water testing.

Sustainability: Sustainable agriculture projects that focus on ensuring the profitability of specialty crop farms while reducing natural resource inputs and impacts on the environment. Nutrient management, cover crop research, efficient use of water for crop production, sustainable landscape practices including efficient water use, maintaining clean water; impact of perennial specialty crops on the environment.

Review Process and Criteria

All qualifying application packets will be evaluated by the SCBGP Evaluation Committee after the grant application packet submittal deadline. The Evaluation Team will be made up of Delaware industry partners and consumers with the appropriate background and expertise necessary to evaluate project proposals.

The Evaluation Team will use the SCBGP-FB Application Rating Criteria listed to rate the application packets. After the application packets have been evaluated and rated, grant award recommendations will be made to the Cabinet Secretary with the Delaware Department of Agriculture based on the rating and the strength of the project proposal as determined by the Evaluation Team. The Delaware Department of Agriculture Cabinet Secretary will have final say on all projects submitted into the State Plan.

Application Rating Criteria	Maximum Points	Points Received
1. Problem Statement and Specialty Crop Context	20	
Does the applicant define the problem the project is proposing to address? Does the project address the problem? Does this project meet the goal of enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops?		
2. Project Work Plan	15	
How well do tasks relate to the goals and objectives? Is the timeline reasonable?		
3. Project Description	15	
How well does the applicant describe the project? How well does the applicant define the need for and purpose of the project?		
4. Measurable Outcomes	15	
Does the project include at least two measurable outcomes? How well will the proposed project allow the applicant to quantify and document the project's benefits and outcomes?		
5. Potential Impact	10	
Does the applicant clearly demonstrate how the project will have an impact on more than one grower? Does the project provide a direct benefit to and how effective will the project be at enhancing the competitiveness of Delaware specialty crops?		

6. Project Commitment and Oversight	10	
Does the applicant demonstrate a strong commitment to the success of the project?		
7. Project Outreach and Sharing results	5	
How well does the project describe a plan for sharing project results? Does the project clearly identify a target audience? Is the outreach plan feasible and effective?		
8. Matching Funds and In-Kind Contributions	5	
Are matching funds or in-kind donations provided or anticipated? How secure is the match?		
9. Budget	5	
Do the budget and budget narrative clearly show how each cost is necessary to the project?		
TOTAL POINTS		

Grant Awards

Notification of Award: Successful proposals will be chosen on the merits of the project as they relate to the published criteria and will be included in the Delaware State Plan which will be submitted to AMS no later than the final deadline which they set for the receiving of applications for approval. Applicants will be notified in writing whether or not their project is selected for inclusion in the Delaware State Plan. Following approval of the Delaware State Plan by AMS, applicants will be notified and applicants will also be sent a Grant Award Agreement to sign. The Delaware Department of Agriculture anticipates that grant awards and notification will be made in late 2009.

Grant Award Agreement and Payment: Prior to beginning work on the proposed project or receiving funding, successful applicants will be required to sign a Grant Award Agreement with the Delaware Department of Agriculture indicating their intention to complete the proposed tasks and authorizing the Delaware Department of Agriculture to monitor the progress of the proposed project. Grant funds will be distributed by the Delaware Department of Agriculture as soon as the available funds are received from AMS-USDA, which should be early 2010.

Grant Award Agreements must be signed and returned to the Delaware Department of Agriculture within 30 days of receipt. Failure to submit an executed copy of the Grant Award Agreement within 30 days of receipt will result in the loss of awarded grant funds, unless the delay was caused by circumstances outside the control of the grantee.

Grant Award Agreements may extend up to three years in duration depending on the type of project. Delaware Department of Agriculture staff will write your grant award agreement based on the information you provide, so it is important that you carefully complete the application packet.

Reporting Requirements

Semi Annual Reports – During the award period grantees shall submit a semi-annual narrative describing the progress in achieving grant outcomes and detailing the achievement of the quantitative performance measures as included in the project proposal. Expenditure reports detailing accurate record of expenditures incurred in association with the proposed project to the Delaware Department of Agriculture’s Specialty Crop Block Grant Program are also required.

Annual Reports – Grantees are required to submit written performance reports annually to the Delaware Department of Agriculture detailing the project status and how grant monies were used to achieve project outcomes outlined in the project proposal submitted with the grant application packet. The first report will be due to the Delaware Department of Agriculture one year from the date the grant agreement between the Delaware Department of Agriculture and USDA is signed. Subsequent annual reports for multi-year projects must be received by the Delaware Department of Agriculture no later than forty five (45) calendar days after the close of each twelve month period. Performance reports must be submitted to the Delaware Department of Agriculture on an annual basis until the project is completed. Performance reports must also include a detailed budget report that tracks all expenditures against the project budget submitted with the grant proposal.

Budget Adjustments – If a project budget adjustment is needed during the project period, a written request may be made to the Delaware Department of Agriculture to reallocate budget funds between budget categories. However, the total budget amount as dictated by the approved grant award cannot be adjusted. Grantees may not spend funds from line items not approved in the Grant Award Agreement. No deviation from the approved budget will be allowed without prior approval by means of a fully executed budget amendment.

Unexpended funds – Grantees who receive advances will return to the Delaware Department of Agriculture the unexpended balance of awarded grant funds at the end of the grant period.

Application Requirements

Each application submitted must include the following sections:

Contact Information/Cover Sheet: See Attachment A.

Abstract - This section should describe the lead agency or organization, goals and objectives of the project in a maximum of 300 words.

Purpose - State the issue, problem or opportunity that will be addressed in the project. Explain why it is important and timely. Clearly describe the goals and objectives of the project. Indicate if the project will be or has been submitted to or funded by another Federal or State grant program.

Potential Impact - Discuss the number of people or operations that will be impacted by the project, the beneficiaries and the potential economic impact if possible.

Proposed Budget - Include a detailed budget proposal showing the use of funds. Include a budget narrative describing cost allocations. Budget categories include: personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, construction and other. Administrative costs will not be eligible for reimbursement under this grant.

Expected Measurable Outcomes - Describe distinct quantifiable outcomes that directly and meaningfully support the project purpose. The outcome-oriented objective must define and event or condition that is external to the project and that is of direct importance to the intended beneficiaries and/or the public.

Provide a timeframe for when the outcome measures will be achieved and describe how the project outcome will be measured. Describe the plan that will be used to show performance improvements and include a performance-monitoring plan to describe the process of collecting and analyzing data to meet the outcome oriented objectives.

Plan of Work - The plan of work must provide a detailed description of how the proposed project is to be carried out. It should describe the tasks or objectives to be performed, provide a timetable illustrating projected task completion dates, a list of project participants or subcontractors responsible for tasks and location of activities.

Key Personnel - Describe the partnerships, alliances, networks, or other collaborative efforts that will be created to implement this project as well as the specific commitments from each (i.e. in-kind, monetary, labor, etc.). List all parties involved and describe what each contributes to the successful completion of this proposal

Application Format

Application packets must be submitted in entirety. Incomplete application packets will not be given further consideration. Your application packet must include the following:

1. Proposal(s) must be organized and have the requested information in the sequence presented in the Application Requirement section of this Request for Proposal.
2. An entity may submit more than one application packet, but only if the application packets are for completely different projects.
3. Proposal(s) should be typed, single spaced, in 12 pt. font, with one inch margins.
4. Complete application packets are not to exceed 6 pages in length (1 page cover sheet, 4 page project proposal, and 1 page budget)

5. Do not bind application packets. Each application packet must be stapled once in the upper left-hand corner.
6. Submit SEVEN printed complete original application packets and ONE electronic copy of the application packet.
7. The person authorized to receive funds must sign the original copy of the application and all subsequent documents in the grant process.

Application Due Date

The Delaware Department of Agriculture must receive the paper copies and an electronic copy of the completed application packets no later than **5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 3, 2009**. *This is not a postmark deadline; application packets must be received by the grant deadline date and time.* No late or incomplete applications will be accepted.

Mail the paper copy of the proposal to:

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – Farm Bill
Delaware Department of Agriculture
2320 South DuPont Highway
Dover, DE 19901

Mail the electronic version of the proposal in Word via email attachment to:

JoAnn.Walston@state.de.us

Attachment A
Contact Information/Cover Sheet

Date:	Past State or Federal Grant Recipient? If so, what grants?
Project Title:	
Project Coordinator:	
Organization:	
Street Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
Phone:	Fax:
Email:	Federal Tax ID Number or EIN:
Best Way to Contact You: Phone Email (please circle)	
Amount of Funding Requested: \$	
Project Duration (please circle) 1 year 2 year 3 year	
Signature of Person Responsible for the Grant:	

Each application submitted must include the following sections:

- **Abstract**
- **Purpose**
- **Potential Impact**
- **Financial Feasibility**
- **Expected Measurable Outcomes**
- **Plan of Work**

Attachment B Proposed Budget

Use this sheet to show all project funds, all grant funds, and all matching funds, as well as all sources of these funds. Use Attachment B to explain these amounts.

Name of Applicant Organization: _____

Project Title: _____

Estimated Expenses	SCBGP-FB Funds Requested	Gov't	Business & Industry	Other (Include other grants or in-kind)	Total
A. Personnel (Salaries & Wages)					
B. Fringe Benefits					
C. Travel					
D. Equipment					
E. Supplies					
F. Contractual					
G. Other					
H. Program Income					
TOTAL Project Cost					

Line A - Salaries & Wages

Line B - Fringe Benefits

Line C - Travel: Please provide destination; purpose of trip; number of people traveling; number of days traveling; estimated airfare costs; estimated ground transportation costs; estimated lodging and meals costs; estimated mileage costs for the travel

Line D - Equipment: This category includes items of property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more. If the cost is under \$5,000, then include these items under SUPPLIES. Provide an itemized list of equipment purchases or rentals, along with a brief narrative on the intended use of each equipment item, and the cost for all the equipment purchases or rentals.

Line E - Supplies: This is anything with acquisition cost under \$5,000 and could be anything from office supplies and software to educational or field supplies. For non-typical materials & supplies items, include a brief narrative of how this fits with the project.

Line F – Contractual: Provide a short description of the services each contract covers and include the flat rate fee OR the total hourly rate fee for each contract

Line G - Other

Line H - Program Income : Indicate the nature or source of program income (for ex: registration fees)

Attachment C Definition of Specialty Crops

Specialty crops are defined by law as “fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture.” The tables below list plants commonly considered fruits and tree nuts, vegetables, culinary herbs and spices, medicinal plants, and nursery, floriculture, and horticulture crops. Ineligible commodities are also listed.

This list is not intended to be all inclusive, but rather intended to give examples of the most common specialty crops. It will be updated as USDA gets new questions. Please refer to the USDA-AMS Web site to get the most current list (www.ams.usda.gov).

List of Plants Commonly Considered Fruits and Tree Nuts

Almond	Cherry	Guava	Persimmon
Apple	Chestnut (for Nuts)	Kiwi	Pineapple
Apricot	Coconut	Litchi	Pistachio
Avocado	Coffee	Macadamia	Plum (including Prune)
Banana	Cranberry	Mango	Pomegranate
Blackberry	Currant	Nectarine	Quince
Blueberry	Date	Olive	Raspberry
Breadfruit	Feijou	Papaya	Strawberry
Cacao	Fig	Passion fruit	Suriname cherry
Cashew	Filbert (Hazelnut)	Peach	Walnut
Citrus	Gooseberry	Pear	
Cherimoya	Grape (including raisin)	Pecan	

List of Plants Commonly Considered Vegetables

Artichoke	Collards (including Kale)	Mustard and other Greens	Rutabaga
Asparagus	Cucumber	Okra	Salsify
Bean Snap or Green Lima Dry or edible	Edamame	Pea Garden, English or Edible Pod	Spinach
Beet, table	Eggplant	Onion	Squash (Summer and Winter)
Broccoli (including Broccoli Raab)	Endive	Opuntia	Sweet corn
Brussels Sprouts	Garlic	Parsley	Sweet Potato
Cabbage (including Chinese)	Horseradish	Parsnip	Swiss chard
Carrot	Kohlrabi	Pepper	Taro
Cauliflower	Leek	Potato	Tomato (including Tomatillo)
Celeriac	Lettuce	Pumpkin	Turnip
Celery	Melon (all types)	Radish (all types)	Watermelon
Chive	Mushroom (cultivated)	Rhubarb	

List of Plants Commonly Considered Culinary Herbs and Spices

Ajwain	Cassia	Filé (Gumbo, cultivated)	Oregano
Allspice	Catnip	Fingerroot	Orris root
Angelica	Chervil	French sorrel	Paprika
Anise	Chicory	Galangal	Parsley
Annatto	Cicely	Ginger	Pepper
Artemisia (all types)	Cilantro	Hops	Rocket (arugula)
Asafetida	Cinnamon	Horehound	Rosemary
Basil (all types)	Clary	Hyssop	Rue
Bay (cultivated)	Cloves	Lavender	Saffron
Bladder wrack	Comfrey	Lemon Balm	Sage (all types)
Bolivian coriander	Common Rue	Lemon Thyme	Savory (all types)
Borage	Coriander	Lovage	Tarragon
Calendula	Cress	Mace	Thyme
Chamomile	Cumin	Mahlab	Turmeric
Candle Nut	Curry	Malabathrum	Vanilla
Caper	Dill	Marjoram	Wasabi
Caraway	Fennel	Mint (all types)	Watercress
Cardamom	Fenugreek	Nutmeg	

List of Herb Commonly Considered Medicinal Herbs

Artemissia	Foxglove	Marshmallow	Sorrel
Arum	Ginko Biloba	Mullein	Stevia
Astragalus	Ginseng	Passion flower	Tansy
Boldo	Goat's Rue	Patchouli	Urtica
Cananga	Goldenseal	Pennyroyal	Witch hazel
Comfrey	Gypsywort	Pokeweed	Wood betony
Coneflower	Horehound	St. John's wort	Wormwood
Ephedra	Horsetail	Senna	Yarrow
Fenugreek	Lavender	Skullcap	Yerba Buena
Feverfew	Liquorice	Sonchus	

List of Atypical Nursery, Floriculture and Horticulture Crops

Note: Under the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP), turfgrass sod is not eligible. Under the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – Farm Bill (SCBGP-FB), horticulture was added to the definition making turfgrass sod and seed eligible.

Christmas Trees	Honey	Maple Syrup	Turfgrass Sod
Cut Flowers	Hops	Tea Leaves	

List of Ineligible Commodities

Alfalfa	Field Corn	Primrose	Soybeans
Barley	Fish (marine or freshwater)	Quinoa	Sugar beets
Borage	Flaxseed	Rapeseed Oil	Sugarcane
Buckwheat	Hay	Range Grasses	Sunflower Oil
Canola Oil	Livestock products	Rice	Tobacco
Clover	Millet	Rye	Tofu
Cotton	Mustard seed oil	Safflower Oil	Wheat
Cottonseed Oil	Oats	Shellfish (Marine or Freshwater)	Wild Rice
Dairy products	Peanut Oil	Sorghum	
Eggs	Peanuts	Soybean oil	

Attachment D General Terms and Conditions

1. Changes: This Agreement may be amended only with the written consent of both parties.
2. Non-discrimination: Grantee may not discriminate on the basis of:
 - a. Political or religious opinion or affiliation, marital status, race, color, creed, or national origin;
 - b. Sex or age, except when age or sex constitutes a *bona fide* occupational qualification; or
 - c. The physical or mental disability of a qualified individual.
3. Drug and Alcohol-Free Work Place: Grantee agrees to comply with Delaware's policy concerning a drug and alcohol-free work place, and shall remain in compliance throughout the term of this Agreement.
4. Termination for Non-Appropriation (Multi-Year Agreements): If funds are not appropriated or otherwise made available to support continuation in any fiscal year succeeding the first fiscal year, this Agreement shall be terminated automatically as of the beginning of the fiscal year for which funds are not available.
5. Termination for Convenience: The Delaware Department of Agriculture may terminate this Agreement in whole or in part, without showing cause upon prior written notice to the Grantee specifying the extent and effective date of the termination. The Delaware Department of Agriculture shall pay all reasonable costs associated with this Agreement that the Grantee has incurred up to the date of termination, and all reasonable costs associated with termination of the Agreement.
6. Termination for Default: If the Grantee violates any provision of this Agreement, the Delaware Department of Agriculture may terminate the Agreement by giving the Grantee written notice of the termination.
7. Delaware Law Prevails: The law of Delaware shall govern the interpretation and enforcement of this Agreement.
8. Record-keeping/Audit: The Grantee shall retain and maintain all records and documents relating to this Agreement for three years after final payment by the Delaware Department of Agriculture hereunder or any applicable statute of limitations, whichever is longer, and shall make them available for inspection and audit by authorized representatives of the Delaware Department of Agriculture at all reasonable times.
9. Severability: It is understood and agreed by the parties hereto that if any of these provisions shall contravene, or be invalid under the laws of the particular state, county, or jurisdiction where used, such contravention or invalidity shall not invalidate the whole agreement, but the Agreement shall be construed as if not containing the particular provision or provisions held to

be invalid in the said particular state, county, or jurisdiction, and the rights and obligations of the parties shall be construed and enforced accordingly.

10. Use/Return of Funds. The Grantee shall use all funds provided by the Delaware Department of Agriculture strictly in accordance with the Agreement and return all funds not used should the Delaware Department of Agriculture decide that Grantee may not carry them over for use the following year. If the Agreement is terminated, the Grantee shall return all funds not used.