AgNews

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
2320 South DuPont Highway, Dover, DE 19901

Delaware DEPARTMENT of AGRICULTURE
Serving Agriculture and Protecting Consumers

To: Newsroom Directors and Assignment Editors

For Immediate Release: March 9, 2010

Number of pages: 1

Contact **Anne Fitzgerald**
800.282.8685 (DE only)
302.698.4520
302.242.4092 (Cell)

DDA announces specialty crop grant program

Grant program information and assistance workshop scheduled for March 29, 2010

On March 9, Ed Kee, Delaware Secretary of Agriculture, announced the 2010 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program to fund projects that solely enhance the competitiveness of Specialty Crops in Delaware. The Specialty Crop Block Grant Program was established in the 2008 Farm Bill.

The Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA) has established a competitive grant process to award these federal funds in 2010. The Department will be administering funds totaling $251,106 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.

The Delaware Department of Agriculture will be hosting a Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Workshop at DDA on March 29, 2010, at 4:00 PM, to answer any questions on the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program and to discuss the application process.

Both the paper copies and the electronic copy of the grant applications must be received by 4:30 P.M. on Monday, May 3, 2010.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) website:

- Specialty crops are defined as fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture).
- Eligible plants must be intensively cultivated and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification to be considered specialty crops.
- A complete listing of all eligible crops may be found at: www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateJ&navID=DefinitionofSpecialtyCrops&rightNav1=DefinitionofSpecialtyCrops&topNav=Home&leftNav=&page=SCBGPDefinitions&resultType=&acct=fvgrntprg

To receive a copy of the grant application or for questions about the grant application, please contact Jo-Ann Walston, DDA Marketing Specialist, at (302)698-4523 or JoAnn.Walston@state.de.us. The grant application packet will be available on the DDA website www.dda.delaware.gov – under Hot Topics beginning March 9, 2010.

###