

USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant-Farm Bill



2012 APPLICATION INFORMATION



Items Covered Today:



- Background on grant and USDA definitions.
- Review of deadlines and timeframe.
- Project Specifications.
- Examples of acceptable/unacceptable projects.
- Examples of other states and previous North Dakota projects
- Breakdown of each section of the application.
- Review Panel evaluation criteria.
- Review of reporting requirements and post award responsibilities.
- Additional Information

Grant Background and USDA Definitions



Purpose:

The purpose of the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) is to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Specialty crops are defined as “fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture).”

Legislative Authority:

The SCBGP was authorized on December 21, 2004, by [Section 101 of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004](#). The Act authorized the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide grants to states to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. In 2008, [Section 10109 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 \(the Farm Bill\)](#) amended the Act, which established the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – Farm Bill (SCBGP-FB).



Grant Background and USDA Definitions



Eligible Applicants:

- Proposed projects must be supported by the impacted specialty crop growers or industry sector. This may be illustrated by support from the industry sector organization or by individual letters of support from impacted growers.
- Proposals will be accepted from individuals, groups, businesses and organizations involved in North Dakota agriculture. Proposals may involve collaborations or partnerships between producers, industry, academia or agricultural organizations. Applicants may cooperate with any public or private organization.
- Projects should benefit the specialty crop industry and/or the public rather than a single organization, institution, individual or commercial product. Single organizations, institutions, and individuals are eligible to participate as project partners.

Funding Formula:

The minimum base grant each State is eligible to receive is equal to the higher of \$100,000 or 1/3 of 1 percent of the total amount of funding made available for that fiscal year. In addition, AMS will allocate the remainder of the grant funds based on the value of specialty crop production in each state in relation to the national value of specialty crop production using the latest available cash receipt data.

North Dakota has received slightly over \$600,000 in federal funding for the 2012 specialty crop grant.

Grant Background and USDA Definitions



What is the grant's overall goal that projects must strive to do?

- Projects must solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops in domestic and foreign markets.

What does this mean?

Grant Background and USDA Definitions



Projects Must

- SOLELY enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops
 - *Solely*: funds only go towards specialty crops and do not benefit non-specialty crops such as dairy, livestock, or poultry among others
 - *Specialty crops*: fruits, vegetables, dried fruit, tree nuts, horticulture, nursery crops, floriculture, maple syrup, honey, Christmas trees
 - *Enhance the competitiveness*: the project makes the focused specialty crop(s) more competitive locally, state wide, regionally, nationally, or internationally.
 - ✦ Example: A single grower requests funds to demonstrate the viability of organic small fruit production and partners with Cooperative Extension to publicize the working model of diversification to other regional growers.
 - ✦ Example: Establishing a distribution system to incorporate local produce in school lunches.
- Projects benefit the specialty crop industry and/or public NOT a single organization, individual, institution, or business.
 - *Benefits the industry*: The industry as a whole and not a single organization, individual, or business can benefit from these funds.

Grant Background and USDA Definitions



- Projects impact and produce measurable outcomes for the specialty crop industry
 - *Measurable outcomes:*
 - ✦ Produces *at least one distinct, quantifiable (an actual number, percentage, etc) result.*
 - ✦ Qualitative results are acceptable as well, but need to be elaborated upon – how will you measure these results.

A complete list of all specialty crops can be found on the USDA AMS SCBG website – www.ams.usda.gov/scbgp and click on *Definition of Specialty Crops*.

Grant Background and USDA Definitions



All Listed Eligible Crops

Fruits and Tree Nuts

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

Vegetables

Artichoke	Mustard and other greens
Asparagus	Okra
Bean	Pea
Snap or green	Garden, English or edible pod
Lima	
Dry, edible	
Beet, table	Onion
Broccoli (including broccoli raab)	Opuntia
Brussels sprouts	Parsley
Cabbage (including Chinese)	Parsnip
Carrot	Pepper
Cauliflower	Potato
Celeriac	Pumpkin
Celery	Radish (all types)
Chive	Rhubarb
Collards (including kale)	Rutabaga
Cucumber	Salsify
Edamame	Spinach
Eggplant	Squash (summer and winter)
Endive	Sweet corn
Garlic	Sweet potato
Horseradish	Swiss chard
Kohlrabi	Taro
Leek	Tomato (including tomatillo)
Lettuce	Turnip
Melon (all types)	Watermelon
Mushroom (cultivated)	

Grant Background and USDA Definitions



Culinary Herbs and Spices

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

Medicinal Herbs

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

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.

Honey	Tea Leaves
Turfgrass	Maple Syrup
Hops	

Annual Bedding Plants

Begonia	Coleus
Dahlia	Geranium
Impatiens	Marigold
Pansy	Petunia
Snapdragon	Vegetable Transplants

Potted Flowering Plants

African Violet	Azalea
Flowering Bulbs	Poinsettia

Potted Herbaceous Perennials

Astilbe	Columbine
Coreopsis	Daylily
Dianthus	Heuchera
Hosta	Ornamental Grasses
Peony	Phlox
Rudbeckia	Salvia
Vinca	

Cut Flowers

Carnation	Chrysanthemum
Delphinium	Gladiolus
Iris	Lily
Orchid	Rose
Tulip	

Cut Cultivated Greens

Asparagus Fern	Coniferous Evergreens
Eucalyptus	Leatherleaf Fern
Pittosporum	

Foliage Plants

Anthurium	Bromeliad
Cacti	Dieffenbachia
Dracaena	Fern
Ficus	Ivy
Palm	Philodendron
Spathiphyllum	

Christmas Trees

Balsam Fir	Blue Spruce
Douglas Fir	Fraser Fir
Noble Fir	Scots Pine
White Pine	

Deciduous Flowering Trees

Crabapple	Dogwood
Crepe Myrtle	Flowering Pear
Flowering Cherry	Flowering Plum
Hawthorn	Magnolia
Redbud	Service Berry

Broadleaf Evergreens

Azalea	Boxwood
Cotoneaster	Euonymus
Holly	Pieris
Rhododendron	Viburnum

Deciduous Shade Trees

Ash	Elm
Honey Locust	Linden
Maple	Oak
Poplar	Sweetgum
Sycamore	

Landscape Conifers

Aborvitae	Chamaecyparis
Hemlock	Juniper
Pine	Spruce
Yew	

Deciduous Shrubs

Barberry	Bubbleia
Hibiscus	Hydrangea
Rose	Spirea
Viburnum	Weigela

Grant Background and USDA Definitions

Ineligible Commodities

List of Ineligible Commodities

Alfalfa	Peanuts
Amylomaize	Pod corn
Barley	Primrose
Borage	Quinoa
Buckwheat	Rapeseed oil
Canola	Range grasses
Canola Oil	Rice
Clover	Rye
Cotton	Safflower meal
Cottonseed oil	Safflower oil
Dairy products	Shellfish (marine or freshwater)
Dent corn	Sorghum
Eggs	Soybean oil
Field corn	Soybeans
Fish (marine or freshwater)	Striped Maize
Flax	Sugar beets
Flaxseed	Sugarcane
Flint corn	Sunflower oil
Flower corn	Tobacco
Hay	Tofu
Livestock products	Triticale
Millet	Waxy corn
Mustard seed oil	Wheat
Oats	White corn
Peanut oil	Wild Rice

Deadlines and Timeframe



- Open RFP: **February 1, 2012**
- Application Deadline: **April 20, 2012, 5:00pm**
- Review Panel Meets: **May 11, 2012**
- NDDA notifies applicants of ND award: **May 23, 2012**
- NDDA submits compiled application to USDA: **July 11, 2012**
- Expected Date of Federal Award: **October 1, 2012**

REMINDER: Projects CANNOT begin until state contracts have been signed!



Project Specifications



- **Project duration:**
 - Projects can last up to eighteen (18) months.
 - ✦ They can be less than eighteen months, but no more.
 - ✦ Extensions will only be granted under extra-ordinary circumstances.
 - ✦ Projects cannot begin until after ND has been awarded by the USDA and a state contract has been signed between the NDDA and the subgrantee.

- **Who Can Apply:**
 - Commodity groups
 - Agricultural organizations
 - Colleges and universities
 - Producers
 - Municipalities
 - State agencies
 - Agricultural nonprofits

- **Maximum Award:**
 - \$100,000 for any given project.
 - ✦ An organization, etc can apply again, even if previously awarded.



Project Specifications



- **Submission:**
 - All applications **MUST** be submitted via email
 - Microsoft Word format
 - 12pt, Arial font
 - 1 inch margins
 - Does not exceed seven (7) pages
 - ✦ One for the Application Cover Page
 - ✦ Five for the Project Narrative
 - ✦ One for the Budget Form

All applications must be submitted via email to Emily Edlund, edlund@nd.gov by close of business (5:00pm) on **April 20, 2012. All applications need to be received by NDDA by 5:00 pm on April 20, 2012.**

Late applications will not be considered.



Project Examples - Unacceptable



Project Example	Solely enhances the competitiveness of specialty crops	Benefits the industry as a whole
A company applies for funds to purchase starter plants or equipment used to plant, cultivate, and grow a specialty crop for the purpose of making a profit, or to expand production of a single business.	NO	NO
A single farmer erects high tunnels on their property to extend the growing season of tomatoes and lettuce and conducts a field day and farm tour to encourage other small family farmers to adopt the production methods.	YES	NO
A proposal for funds from a specialty crop organization to promote their members' businesses.	MAYBE	NO

Project Examples - Unacceptable



- **Unacceptable Expenses:**
 - political activities
 - lobbying activities
 - Capital expenditures for general purpose equipment, buildings, and land
 - ✦ General purpose equipment examples include:
 - office equipment and furnishings,
 - telephone networks,
 - IT equipment and systems,
 - printing equipment,
 - motor vehicles.

Project Examples - Unacceptable



- You cannot use this money to:
 - Build a building/structure
 - Repair a building/structure
 - Purchase vehicles
 - Purchase land
 - Benefit your farm alone

Project Examples - Acceptable



Project Example	Solely enhances the competitiveness of specialty crops	Benefits the industry as a whole
A <i>single</i> company requests funds to provide a viable pollination alternative to specialty crop stakeholders in the region, which currently does not have one.	YES	YES
A single specialty crop organization requests funds to conduct an advertising campaign that will benefit their specialty crop members.	YES	YES
Conduct a market analysis to determine a baseline estimate of sales by specialty crops in schools; and generate promotional materials and outreach resources based on the results of the survey for schools	YES	YES
Partner with Women in Ag to assist and train female farmers, young beginning ranchers with traditional systems to transition to higher income specialty crops by examining the impact of two organic based production systems for specialty fruits and vegetables for small- scale farmers	YES	YES
Implement a fifty percent cost-share reimbursement program, up to \$500, to specialty crop producers to become USDA Good Agricultural Practices certified	YES	YES



Project Examples – Of Special Note



- Increasing child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops.
- Improving efficiency and reducing costs of distribution systems.
- Developing “Good Agricultural Practices”, “Good Handling Practices”, “Good Manufacturing Practices”, and in cost-share arrangements for funding audits of such systems for small farmers, packers, and processors.
- Investing in specialty crop research, including organic research to focus in conservation and environmental outcomes.
- Enhancing food safety.

Project Examples – Of Special Note



- Developing new and improved seed varieties for specialty crops.
- Pest and disease control.
- Development of organic and sustainable production practices.
- Improving food access, developing local and regional food systems for specialty crop farmers including Native American and disadvantaged farmers

**For a complete list of previous SCBG Awards visit the USDA, AMS SCBG website:
www.ams.usda.gov/scbgp and click on *Grant Awards*.**

What are other states doing?



- **Illinois**

- Partnering with WBBM TV- a subsidiary of CBS to launch an integrated, multi media campaign
 - ✦ Designed to bring “Specialty Crops” to the forefront of consumers’ minds and promote healthier eating habits
 - ✦ Only eligible specialty crops will be included in the promotions
 - ✦ Boosts industry sales and keeps Illinois dollars in state

What are other states doing?



- **Florida**

- Partnering with Florida Small Farms to improve dialog among farmers, policy makers, and industry members
 - ✦ Expands outreach efforts, expands the Small Farms Food Safety Implementation Team (established through the funding year 2011), and providing partial support for the statewide Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference
 - ✦ Targeted marketing efforts and limited registration to only specialty crop farmers
 - ✦ Builds on previous success

What are other states doing?



- **California**
 - California Agriculture Communications Coalition
 - 120 agriculture associations
 - Over 400 farmers
 - 8 social media training sessions
 - Blogger event
 - Facebook contest
 - Social media outreach

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2012



What are other states doing?



- **Rhode Island**

- Partnered with Rhode Island Center for Ag Promotion and Education

- ✦ Developed a mini-documentary that generated awareness among the public concerning local specialty crop agriculture and agritourism

- **Alaska**

- Launched a specialty crop marketing campaign in 2011 that will provide greater outreach and increased education about the availability of and access to Alaska Grown specialty crops year round

Previously Accepted North Dakota Projects



- 2010
 - NDSU CREC
 - ✦ Evaluate specialty crops for adaptations in ND and make public and commercial enterprises aware of opportunities through field tours
 - NDFMGA
 - ✦ Provide a mini-grant marketing program to local organized farmers markets solely for the purpose to increase awareness of the availability of local fruits and vegetables
 - ✦ Provide an opportunity for students in ND schools to learn about the production and marketing of vegetables through a school garden grant program



Previously Accepted North Dakota Projects



- 2011
 - FARRMS
 - ✦ Conduct a survey of school food service coordinators in order to gauge the usage of local produce in ND schools and the number of farmers that sell produce to the schools
 - Williston Ag Diversification Group
 - ✦ Evaluate and advance newly bred and improved “niche” market potato varieties
 - ✦ Provide innovative new potato products for test marketing and creating new and expanding markets for the North Plains region growers, processors and fresh pack suppliers
 - ✦ Allow expanded potato production and potato average expansion to newly developed irrigation areas in west ND, east MT and MT

Application Breakdown



- **Project Title and Abstract**
 - Include the title of the project
 - A summary (abstract) of 200 words or less.
- **Organization:**
 - Include the organization's name
 - Contact person
 - Organization contact information
- **Project Purpose:** Clearly state the purpose of each project.
 - Should include the specific issue/problem/ interest/need to be addressed and why the project is important and timely.
 - ✦ If the project is a statewide marketing program or farmers' market project, describe how the you will ensure that funding is being used to *solely* enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops.
 - ✦ Indicate if the project will be or has been submitted to or funded by another Federal or State grant program and if the project duplicates efforts of the SCBGP-FB and the other Federal or State grant program. If it does not duplicate, how does it enhance?



Application Breakdown



- **Expected Measurable Outcomes:** For each project, describe *at least one* distinct, quantifiable (an actual number, percentage, etc), measurable outcome that directly and meaningfully supports the projects purpose.
 - The outcome-oriented objective must define an event or condition that is external to the project and that is of direct importance to the intended beneficiaries and/or the public.
 - Describe how the project outcome will be measured. Describe the plan that will be used to show performance improvements. Include a performance-monitoring plan to describe the process of collecting and analyzing data to meet the outcome-oriented objectives.

GOAL:	
PERFORMANCE MEASURE:	
BASELINE:	
TARGET:	

Application Breakdown

- **Outcomes are:**

Changes in behavior or condition that reflect a positive impact to the specialty crop industry.

Note: outcomes generally begin with a verb like

Increase, expand or improve

- *Specific and measurable:* tracking data to monitor outcomes is practical and timely
- *Meaningful:* achieving an outcome indicates fulfillment of purpose and program toward longer-term impact

- **Outcomes are not:**

- Activities or processes (hosting an event is an activity, increasing awareness is an outcome)

- Immeasurable long-term

EXAMPLE of Outcome Measure

Goal - Increase the number of low income people in X County who have access to fruits and vegetables

Performance Measure- Number of people who actively participate in the community garden program

Benchmark- In 2011, 100 people participated in the community garden program from May through September

Target – In 2012, increase participation by 50% 200 people during the same period.

Application Breakdown



- Work Plan:** For each project, explain briefly the activities that will be performed to accomplish the objectives of the project and the budget required for each activity.

Project Activity	Who	Timeline
Assemble the specialty crop steering committee to provide direction throughout project	Agricultural Marketing Council, specialty crop industry representatives from the mushroom, apple, and peach councils	January 2008
Develop statement of work for literature review	Ag Marketing Council	January
Procure literature reviewer	Ag Marketing Council	January – February

Application Breakdown



- **Budget Narrative:** Provide descriptive text explaining how and why the budget is needed and justified to accomplish the Expected Measureable Outcomes outlined in the previous section. All requested budget items/activities should correlate to the purpose/goals of the project and demonstrate that they are reasonable and adequate for the proposed work. Provide sufficient detail about each budget category below.
 - *Personnel.* For each project participant, indicate their title, the percent of full time equivalents (FTE), and the corresponding salary for the FTE.

In order for secretarial and clerical salaries to be allowable as direct charges to the awards, a justification of how that person will be directly involved in the project must be included in the narrative. General administrative or accounting duties are not considered acceptable. The duties must be directly related to the project application.
 - *Fringe Benefits.* Indicate the rate and amount of fringe benefits for each salary listed above.

Application Breakdown



- **Budget Narrative cont.:**

- *Equipment.* Indicate anticipated purchases or rental costs of equipment and its intended use.
 - ✦ List separately each item of equipment, its intended use, and its cost.
 - ✦ Equipment is defined as an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds \$5,000.
 - If under \$5,000, please include under supplies.
 - ✦ Special purpose equipment must solely enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops and benefit the specialty crop industry. (Note: Prior approval from NDDA/AMS means that the special purpose equipment must be included in the Project Plan, and the Project Plan must receive approval from NDDA/AMS. If special purpose equipment was not originally included in the approved project plan, then the grantee must request approval from NDDA/AMS to purchase the equipment before utilizing grant funds.)
 - ✦ Rental costs of buildings and equipment are allowable as direct costs in accordance with the cost principles in Subpart T of 7 CFR 3015.
- *Supplies.* Provide an itemize list of projected supply expenditures and the dollar amount for each item.

Application Breakdown



- **Budget Narrative cont.:**

- *Contractual.* Provide a short description of the services each contract covers and the flat rate fee OR the total hourly rate. Compensation for individual consultant services should be reasonable and consistent with that paid for similar services in the marketplace. Consultant may not exceed \$130,000 or \$500 per eight-hour day.
- *Other.* Provide detailed descriptions of other costs such as conferences or meetings, communications, speaker/trainer fees, publication costs, and data collection, and other budgeted costs associated with each project.
- *Program Income.* If program income will be earned on any project, indicate the nature and source of program income, the estimated amount and *how the income will be used to further enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.* For example, if registration fees are being collected at a conference as part of the project, indicate the estimated amount of registration fees that will be collected.

Application Breakdown



- **Project Oversight:** Describe the oversight practices that provide sufficient knowledge of grant activities to ensure proper and efficient administration.
 - Who Will oversee the project activities?
 - How will oversight be performed? Include timelines.

- **Project Commitment:** Describe how all grant partners commit to and work toward the goals and outcome measures of the proposed project.
 - Who supports this project?
 - How is the North Dakota Specialty Crop Industry support demonstrated?
 - How will grant partners work toward the goals and outcomes of this project?

Review Panel Project Evaluation Criteria



The Review Panel must select projects:

1. Solely enhanced the competitiveness of specialty crops.
2. Benefit all specialty crop producers in ND/for that industry.
3. Are well rounded, complete projects that efficiently used staff time and federal funds.
4. Are feasible projects that show a timeline and strategy for implementation.
5. Projects are significant to the industry and will make an important and/or original contribution to the field of endeavor.

Review Panel Project Evaluation Criteria



- Review Panel is made up of both industry and specialty crop producers
 - Statewide ag organizations
 - Commodity association
 - Buy local groups
 - Specialty crop producers
 - Non- specialty crop producers
 - Other state agency reps
- Have not submitted projects for consideration.

Post Award Responsibilities & Reporting Requirements



- Upon being awarded, the successful applicants will be required to complete the following documents:
 - Contract or Memorandum of Understanding
 - Provide quarterly invoices

Post Award Responsibilities & Reporting Requirements



- **Payments:** Awardees will receive funds throughout the duration of the project on an as-needed quarterly basis.
 - 10 % of the awarded amount will be withheld until an acceptable final report is received, along with all financial documentation.
- **Annual Performance Reports:** An Annual Report is required to NDDA 30 days after the end of the first year or the date of the signed grant agreement and each subsequent year until the expiration date of the grant period. The annual performance report should include a cover page and sections for each project that detail the progress to date.
 - One (1) Annual Report will be required unless the project has been completed. If the project has been completed, a final report will take the place of an annual report.
- **Final Performance Report:** A final performance report will be required within 30 days following the end date of the grant agreement. The final report will be posted on the SCBGP-FB website.
 - One Final Report will be required.

Post Award Responsibilities & Reporting Requirements



- **A note about changes to an awarded project:**

Written, prior approval is requirement for the following changes:

- Change Key Personnel
- Scope or Objectives
- Budget Changes for 20% or more
- Extensions may be granted in extra-ordinary circumstances

Additional Information



All applications must be submitted via email to

Emily Edlund, edlund@nd.gov

by

close of business (5:00 pm)

on:

Friday, April 20, 2012

There are no exceptions.

Additional Information



If you have any additional questions or comments,
please contact me:

Emily Edlund

Phone: 701-328-2191

Email: edlund@nd.gov

or go online :

<http://www.nd.gov/ndda/program/specialty-crop-grant-program>