Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Grant Proposal Manual

Federal Fiscal Year 2018 Funding Cycle

Grant Proposal Due Date:

February 15, 2018, 11:59 p.m. MST

Contact:

SCBG Program Manager
Montana Department of Agriculture
Phone: (406) 444-5424
E-mail: scbg@mt.gov
Fax: (406) 444-9442

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: The Montana Department of Agriculture seeks your comments about this Grant Proposal Manual. We will consider the comments when we develop the next Manual for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Submit written stakeholder comments via e-mail to: scbg@mt.gov. In your comments, please state that you are responding to the Federal fiscal year (FY) 2018 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – Grant Proposal Manual.

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Funding Opportunity Description

Mission Statement

The mission of the Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) is to protect producers and consumers, and to enhance and develop agriculture and allied industries.

Legislative Authority

The Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBG) is authorized under section 101 of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 (7 U.S.C. 1621 note) and amended under section 10010 of the Agricultural Act of 2014, Public Law 113-79 (the Farm Bill). SCBG is currently implemented under 7 CFR part 1291 (published March 27, 2009; 74 FR 13313). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) administrates the SCBG, subawarding portions of the funds to State departments of agriculture in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Purpose

Montana's SCBG Program assists entities in solely enhancing the competitiveness of Montana specialty crops.

Available Funds

No announcement has been made regarding the federal funding available for this competition. However, MDA anticipates receiving funding at an amount similar to last year's allocation of $1,263,225.58. MDA plans to award multiple grants from these funds for this grant cycle.

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Critical Dates

Date	Time*	Event	Venue
December 15, 2017	5:00 PM	Post Notice of Funding	MDA Website
February 5, 2018	10:00 AM	Open Question and Answer	Conference Call**
February 13, 2018	1:00 PM	Open Question and Answer	Conference Call**
February 15, 2018	11:59 PM	Applications Due to MDA	Webgrants
March 14, 2018	10:00 AM	Reviewer Meeting	MT Dept. of Ag

May 1, 2018	5:00 PM	Expected announcement of selected applications.	
September 30, 2018		Earliest possible start for proposed projects	
September 29, 2021		Last possible end date for proposed projects	

*All times in Mountain Standard Time

**Call information will be posted on the MDA website

General Compliance

Awarded grant projects must comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations and the terms of the grant award. The Grantee shall comply with the Specialty Crop Competitiveness Act of 2004 of Public Law 108-465 as amended (7 U.S.C. § 1621 note); specialty crop block grant program regulations at 7 CFR Part 1291; federal cost principles at 2 CFR Part 200 and excluded and disqualified participant requirements at 2 CFR Part 180, subpart C. For profit applicants must also comply with Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Subpart 31.2, Contracts with Commercial Organizations, codified at 48 CFR Subpart 31.2.

Eligibility

Eligible & Ineligible Specialty Crops

A comprehensive definition of specialty crops can be found on the USDA website.

Eligible specialty crops must be intensively cultivated and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification to be eligible. Processed products shall constitute greater than 50% of the specialty crop by weight, exclusive of added water.

Eligibility Requirements

Eligible Applicants

State and/or local organizations, government entities, producer associations, academia, community based organizations, and other specialty crop stakeholders are eligible to apply either as single entities or in combined efforts. Regional or multi-state projects may be considered by MDA.

Solely Enhance Specialty Crops

To be eligible for a grant, the project(s) **must solely enhance the competitiveness** of specialty crops in either domestic or foreign markets and benefit crops grown in Montana.

Multiple Beneficiaries

MDA will not award grant funds for projects that solely benefit a particular commercial product or provide a profit to a single organization, institution, or individual. In addition, recipients and subrecipients cannot use grant funds to compete unfairly with private companies that provide equivalent products or services.

Duration

Proposed projects should start no earlier than September 30, 2018 and end no later than September 29, 2021.

Minimum & Maximum Amount

Funding amount requested must be a minimum of $15,000; there is no maximum.

DUNS Number

In order to receive an award all applying entities (as defined in 2 CFR Part 25, subpart C) must provide a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. A DUNS number is a nine-digit number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. (D&B) to uniquely identify business entities.

To get a DUNS number:

- by telephone (currently 866-705-5711); or
- via the web (currently at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform)

Debarment & Suspension

Organizations or individuals that are suspended, debarred, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from eligibility for covered transactions by any Federal department or agency cannot, during the period of suspension, debarment, or exclusion, receive MDA and/or USDA grants or be paid from MDA and/or USDA grant funds, whether under an award, subaward, or contract. Charges made to the SCBG for such individuals (e.g., salary) are unallowable. Regulations published in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and supplemented by USDA at 2 CFR part 417; describe the government-wide debarment and suspension requirements.

You are required to disclose if any of the following conditions apply to Subrecipient or principals, including all key grant management personnel:

- Within the 3-year period preceding the application, the Applicant or its principals have been convicted of, or had a civil judgment rendered against them, for:
  - fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction;
  - violation of a Federal or State antitrust statute;
  - embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification, or destruction of records; or
  - false statements or receipt of stolen property.
- The Applicant or its principals are presently indicted or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated above.
- Within a 3-year period preceding the application, the Applicant or its principals had any public transaction (Federal, State, or local) terminated for cause or default.

A variety of "lower-tier" covered transactions are also subject to these requirements. Contracts (including individual consultants) under grants (where the contract requires the provision of goods or services that will equal or exceed $25,000) and all subawards also are subject to these suspension and debarment rules. Subrecipient is required to comply with the requirements of Subpart C of 2 CFR part

180 that provides Subrecipient's responsibilities when entering into a lower-tier transaction as described above.

Delinquency on Federal Debt

Any organization or individual that is indebted to the United States, and has a judgment lien filed against it for a debt to the United States, is ineligible to receive a Federal grant. Applicants are required to inform MDA if they are delinquent on any Federal debt. If an applicant discloses a delinquency, MDA may not award the grant until the debt is satisfied or satisfactory arrangements are made with the agency to which the debt is owed.

Anyone who has been judged to be in default on a Federal debt and who has had a judgment lien filed against him or her should not be listed as a participant in an application for a SCBG grant until the judgment is paid in full or is otherwise satisfied. No funds may be rebudgeted following an award to pay such an individual. MDA will disallow costs charged to awards that provide funds to individuals in violation of this requirement.

Past Performance

An applicant may be removed from competition in the screening stage if they previously received funding from MDA and failed to adequately deliver on the conditions of that funding. Failure to perform may include, but is not limited to:

- Inability to responsibly manage funds
- Inability to adhere to reporting requirements
- Failure to provide agreed upon deliverables

Eligible Projects

USDA encourages entities to develop projects pertaining to the following issues affecting the specialty crop industry:

- enhancing food safety;
- improving the capacity of all entities in the specialty crop distribution chain to comply with the requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act, for example, by 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 research to focus on conservation and environmental outcomes;
- developing new and improved seed varieties and specialty crops;
- pest and disease control;
- increasing child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops;
- improving efficiency and reducing costs of distribution systems and;
- sustainability.

Projects that support the increased consumption of fruits and vegetables in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by providing incentives at the point of purchase and/or include technologies

for benefit redemption systems should consider submitting those projects to the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Grant Program (FINI).

Projects that support domestic farmers' markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities, local and regional food business enterprises that process, distribute, aggregate, or store locally or regionally produced food products should consider submitting those projects to the Farmers Market Promotion Program and Local Food Promotion Program.

Projects that support biobased products and bioenergy and energy programs, including biofuels and other alternative uses for agricultural and forestry commodities (development of biobased products) should see the USDA energy website at http://www.usda.gov/energy/matrix/home for information on how to submit those projects for consideration to the energy programs supported by USDA.

Examples of Acceptable Projects

- Conducting research on the feasibility of planting, cultivating, and growing a specialty crop in a particular area, the results of which will be shared with many growers throughout the State during the project.
- Demonstrating the viability of organic small fruit production and partnering with Cooperative Extension to publicize the working model of diversification to other regional growers.
- Providing a viable pollination alternative to specialty crop stakeholders in a region that currently does not have one.
- Conducting an advertising campaign that will benefit a non-profit organization's specialty crop members.
- A single farmer erecting high tunnels on his/her 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.

Examples of Unacceptable Projects

- A company requests grant funds to purchase starter plants or equipment used to plant, cultivate, and grow a specialty crop to make a profit, or to expand production of a single business or organization.
- A grant to individual specialty crop businesses or roadside stands to promote their individual business.
- A non-profit organization uses grant funds to purchase produce and then sells that produce to other entities at cost or a higher price than the purchase price while competing with other private companies who sell produce in the area.
- A sole proprietor requests grant funds to redesign her/his logo in order to make her/his specialty crop value-added product stand out at the local farmers' market.
- A single specialty crop organization requests grant funds to market its organization so that it can increase its membership

Priorities

The following priorities have been adopted by MDA specific to the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. These priorities are used to guide the MDA director in making decisions on funding recommendations.

Providing Farmer Education on Specialty Crop

- Farm to institution practices
- Value-added production
- Disease and pest management
- Farm and food safety
- Organic production
- Use of beneficial organisms
- Business development

Supporting Research in the areas of Specialty Crop

- Disease and pest management
- Variety testing and selection
- Organic production
- Use of beneficial organisms

Planning and supporting Infrastructures that create or support Specialty Crop

- Storage
- Processing
- Farm to institute
- Pest management assistance for farmers

Increasing Consumer Awareness of the Value of Specialty Crops through

- Education
- Market Development

Representing a Geographic Diversity of Projects across the State

Multiple Grant Proposals

An entity may submit more than one grant proposal only if the proposals are for distinctly different projects.

Multi-State Partnerships

A project is multi-state when an organization receives SCBG funding from more than one state to execute the same or multiple components of the same project. The project must be identified as a multi-state project in the Grant Proposal.

Applicants should specifically address how the funds requested benefit Montana and are only expended on the portion of the project that benefits Montana.

How to apply

Applications for this grant should be completed on the provided forms in the appendices and submitted via the fundingmt.org website. Forms are also posted on the Montana specialty crop webpage in an open format. Detailed instructions on how to use the fundingmt.org are available on the proposal page of the MDA at: www.scbg.mt.gov

Applications will only be accepted on the forms provided and submitted through fundingmt.org. Applications may not be submitted on paper or through email.

Important Dates

Final Grant Proposal Due Date

Completed grant proposal packets must be uploaded and submitted via fundingmt.org no later than **11:59 p.m. Thursday, February 15, 2018**. **Late applications will not be accepted.**

Project Operating Dates

Proposed projects should start no earlier than September 30, 2018 and end no later than September 29, 2021.

Submission

Requirements for submitting the grant are as follows:

Grant Proposal Packet Requirements

Applicants **must** adhere to the instructions in this grant manual to be considered eligible for grants. Grant Proposal packets must be submitted in their entirety. Applications should not contain any materials not requested in this packet. **Any additional materials submitted, including letters of support, will not be provided to reviewers.**

Method

Applications must be uploaded and submitted via fundingmt.org. If technical difficulties make submitting via the fundingmt.org website is impossible, the applicant should contact the SCBG Program Manager **prior to the application due date**. Detailed instructions on how to use the fundingmt.org are available on the proposal page of the MDA specialty crop block grant webpage.

Instructions for the Proposal template

Applicant Self-Assessment

Appendix A

Grantees will be required to complete the Applicant Self-Assessment form provided in Appendix A. The intent of this form is to inform the screening team of the capacity of the applicant organization to effectively manage federal grants. This form will not be provided to grant reviewers and is not part of an applications final score.

Application Narrative

Appendix B

The following instructions should be read prior to drafting your application. Detailed instructions on how to use the fundingmt.org are available on the MDA specialty crop block grant webpage.

Cover Sheet

Company/Organization Name

Provide the officially registered name of the Applicant company/organization, matching the name registered for the provided DUNS number.

DBA

If applicable, fill in the officially registered "doing business as" name.

Business/Organization Type

Select only one of the provided options.

Tax ID

Provide your organization's Federally-assigned tax ID.

DUNS #

The USDA-AMS 2 CFR part 25, System for Award Management and Universal Identifier Requirements requires MDA to only award funds to entities with a DUNS number. If you do not have a DUNS number, indicate the date on which you applied to receive one.

Grant Project Contact

The Grant Project Contact is the individual responsible for the implementation and day to day management of the grant. If the Grant Project Contact is not an employee of the applicant, a formal written agreement with the Grant Project Contact, specifying an official relationship between the parties, must be established.

Grant Management Contact

The Grant Management Contact is representative of the applicant with authority to act on their organization's behalf in matters related to the acceptance and administration of grants. This individual agrees that the organization will assume the obligations imposed by applicable Federal and State statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances.

Project Title

Provide a title that accurately and succinctly describes the project, **limited to fifteen words**.

Project Start Date

The project start date should be no earlier than September 30, 2018. Projects do not have to be initiated on the grant effective date, but should be initiated as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be achieved within the funded project period.

Project End Date

Project end date should be no later than September 29, 2021.

Specific Specialty Crop deriving benefit from grant

Indicate the specific specialty crop the proposed project will focus on. A list of eligible crops is available at List of crops commonly considered.

Other Project Features

Indicate whether this project have a substantial focus on benefiting:

- ***Beginning farmers*** - individuals or entities who have not operated a farm for more than 10 years and substantially participates in the operation.
- **Socially disadvantaged farmers -** a farmer who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group. A "Socially Disadvantaged Group" is a group whose members have been subject to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program
- **Multi-state** - Indicate if this project has cooperators and budget from multiple states, and list the partnering state(s). USDA-AMS encourages priority for multi-state projects.

Narrative

Abstract

Include a project summary of 250 words or less, suitable for dissemination to the public. It should include:

1. *The name of the applicant organization*
2. *A concise outline the project's desired outcome(s), and*
3. *A description of the general tasks to be completed during the project period to fulfill reach outcomes.*

Project Purpose:

Fill in the boxes provided to answer the questions below.

1. **What is the specific issue, problem or need**?
    - What is the problem or need that you are trying to address?
    - Why is the project important and timely?
    - Demonstrate that this is an issue of importance to specialty crop stakeholders and/or that they have sought or encouraged your involvement in finding a solution.

    MDA prioritizes applications that address problems brought forth by specialty crop stakeholders.
2. **What are the objectives of the project**? Provide general objectives outlining what you want to accomplish with this project, in the table provided in the application document.

Potential Impact

This section should show how the project will impact the specialty crop industry and the public. Remember that project must have broad impact and reach a wide geographic area. The following questions should be answered.

1. **Who are the beneficiaries of the project?** Be as specific as possible, describe the population affected and where they are located. Use statistics to describe the target population of the project.

2. **How many beneficiaries will be impacted?** The answer to this must include a number.

3. **How will the beneficiaries be impacted by the project?** Be specific and refer to the target population of the project. Discuss their current condition, the ideal outcome of the project and how the activities performed will lead to reaching that goal.

Outreach

Describe how you will share the results of the project with specialty crop growers and other interested specialty crop stakeholders.

Project Support

Describe the individuals and organizations that support the nature of the support they are providing.

Eligibility

By marking the box provided, you confirm that this project solely enhances the competitiveness of specialty crops in accordance with and defined by 7 U.S.C. 1621. Further information regarding the definition of a specialty crop can be found at www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp.

Previous Efforts

1. Does the project build on a previously funded SCBG project?

   If YES:

   1. Describe how the project differs from and builds on the previous project.
   2. Provide a summary (3 to 5 sentences) of the outcomes of the previous project(s)

   - What was learned from implementing this project, including potential improvements?
   - How are the lessons-learned incorporated to make the ongoing project more effective and successful at meeting goals and outcomes?
   - Describe the likelihood of your efforts becoming self-sustaining and not indefinitely dependent on grant funds.

2. Did you submit this project to a Federal or State grant program other than the SCBG for funding and/or is a Federal or State grant program other than the SCBGP funding the project currently?

   If YES,

   - Identify which Federal and/or State grant program

- Describe how the SCBGP project differs from or supplements the other grant program(s) efforts.

Project Funding

Provide the following information in this section:

1. **Would this project be possible without SCBG grant funds?** Check one of the provided boxes.

   If NO, you are indicating that there are no other funding sources, public or private, available to fund this. No further explanation is necessary.

   If YES, you are indicating that there are other funding sources, public or private, through which this project could be funded. For this, please provide an explanation regarding the source of funding that would be used for this project if SCBG funds were not granted.

2. **Could the outcomes of this project be accomplished with a reduced budget?**

   Indicating areas for potential cuts does not guarantee any cuts to your budget or project.

   If NO, you are indicating that the project could not be accomplished with a reduced budget (i.e. the funding decision must be "all or nothing").

   If YES, be very specific in indicating which areas of the project could be cut and the corresponding change dollar amount reduction to the overall budget.

Citations (optional)

A list of citations may be added to the application but is strictly optional.

Budget Narrative

Appendix C

If Applicants have questions concerning the allowability of costs after reviewing the Federal cost principles, contact the SCBG Program Manager.

A thorough and detailed budget must be submitted with the Grant Proposal packet. MDA reserves the right to reject Proposals in which the budget calculations or figures cannot easily be discerned.

Please round totals to the next whole dollar.

The funding amount requested must be a minimum of $15,000; there is no maximum.

Matching funds are not required.

Personnel

List the organization's employees whose time and effort can be specifically identified and easily and accurately traced to project activities that solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

For each employee who will be working on the SCBG project complete the following:

- **Name/Title**: Provide the name and title of each employee directly charging time to the grant.
- **Level of Effort**: Provide the FTE or percent of time the employee will dedicate to this project.
- **Funds Requested**: Provide the amount of federal funds you are requesting.

Personnel Justification

For each individual, describe the activities to be completed, including approximately when activities will occur.

Fringe Benefits

Provide the fringe benefit rates for each of the project's employees listed in the Personnel section.

For each employee list:

- **Name/ Title**: Provide the name and title of each employee directly charging time to the grant.
- **Fringe Benefit Calculation**: Show how the funds requested are calculated.
- **Funds Requested**: Provide the amount of federal funds you are requesting.

Travel

Explain the purpose for each trip request by completing the following:

- **Trip Destination**
- **Type of Expense:** airfare, car rental, hotel, meals, mileage, etc.
- **Unit of Measure:** days, miles, nights, etc.
- **Number of Units**
- **Cost per Unit:** $/night, $/mile etc.
- **# of Travelers Claiming Expense**
- **Funds Requested**: Provide the amount of federal funds you are requesting.

Travel Guidance

Allowable for domestic travel when costs are limited to those allowed by organizational policy and the purpose aligns with the purpose project.

Allowable foreign travel includes any travel outside Canada, Mexico, the United States, and any United States territories and possessions. Projects must provide justification for the travel. It is recommended that applicants search the Foreign Agricultural Service database of GAIN reports (http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Pages/Default.aspx) to ensure that proposals will not duplicate information that already exists.

For organizations that do not have formal travel policies and for-profit entities, allowable travel costs may not exceed those established by the Federal Travel Regulation, issued by General Services Administration (GSA), including the maximum per diem and subsistence rates prescribed in those regulations. If a recipient does not have a formal travel policy, those regulations will be used to determine the amount that may be charged for travel costs.

In the case of air travel, project participants must use the lowest reasonable commercial airfares.

Travel Justification

For each trip, describe the purpose of the trip and how it will achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project. Include the approximate date of the trip.

Equipment

Describe any special purpose equipment to be purchased or rented under the grant. ''Special purpose equipment'' is tangible, nonexpendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds $5,000 per unit and is used only for research, medical, scientific, or other technical activities

Rental of general purpose equipment must also be described in this section. Purchase of general purpose equipment is not allowable under this grant.

- **Item Description:** What is the equipment
- **Purchase or Rent:** Will it be purchased or rented
- **Acquisition Date:** Approximately when will it be purchased
- **Funds Requested**: Provide the amount of federal funds you are requesting.

Equipment guidance

Capital expenditures for general purpose equipment, buildings, and land are unallowable as direct charges to the grant.

Capital Expenditures means expenditures for the acquisition cost of the capital assets (equipment, buildings, land), or expenditures to make improvements to capital assets that materially increase their value or useful life. Acquisition cost means the cost of the asset including the cost to put it in place. Acquisition cost for equipment, for example, means that the net invoice price of the equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as tax, duty, protective in transit insurance, freight, and installation may be included in, or excluded from the acquisition cost in accordance with the governmental unit's regular accounting practices.

General Purpose Equipment -unallowable- means equipment, which is not limited to research, scientific or other technical activities. Examples include office equipment and furnishings, telephone networks, information technology equipment and systems, reproduction and printing equipment, and motor vehicles.

Equipment means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds $5,000.

Capital expenditures for special purpose equipment are allowable as direct costs, provided that items with a unit cost of $5,000 or more have the prior approval of MDA.

Special Purpose Equipment means equipment which is used only for research, scientific, or other technical activities. Examples of special purpose equipment include microscopes, spectrometers, and equipment which are used for a single purpose to solely enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops and benefit the specialty crop industry and not a particular commercial product or provide a profit to a single organization, institution, or individual.

Equipment Justification

For each Equipment item describe how this equipment will be used to achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project.

Supplies

List the materials, supplies, and fabricated parts costing less than $5,000 per unit and describe how they will support the purpose and goal of the proposal.

Complete the following:

- **Item Description:** What is going to be purchased
- **Per Unit Cost:** the cost of each individual item purchased
- **Number of Units/Pieces Purchased:** How many of the items will be purchased
- **Acquire When:** Approximately when will the purchase be made
- **Funds Requested**: Provide the amount of federal funds you are requesting.

Supplies Justification

Describe the purpose of each supply listed and how it is necessary for the completion of the project.

Contractual

Contractual/consultant costs are the expenses associated with purchasing goods and/or procuring services performed by an individual or organization other than the applicant in the form of a procurement relationship. If there is more than one contractor or consultant, each must be described separately.

Complete the following:

- **Contractor Name:** List the name of the selected contractor or indicate the contractor has not been selected.
- **Hourly Rate/Flat Rate:** list the contractors fee.
- **Funds Requested**: Provide the amount of federal funds you are requesting.

Contractual Justification

For each contractor describe the activities and how they meet the objectives and outcomes of the project. Include timelines for each activity.

If contracted employee or consultant hourly rates of pay exceed the salary of a GS-15 step 10 Federal employee in your area (https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/), provide a justification for the expense. The consultant hourly rate does not include fringe benefits, travel, indirect costs, or other expenses.

Other

Include any expenses not covered in any of the previous budget categories. Break down costs into cost/unit. Expenses in this section may include, but are not limited to, meetings and conferences, communications, rental expenses, advertisements, publication costs, and data collection.

If you budget meal costs for reasons other than meals associated with travel per diem, provide adequate justification to support that these costs are not entertainment costs.

To complete this section:

- **Item Description:** What will be purchased.
- **Per Unit Cost**
- **Number of units Provided**
- **Acquisition Date:** When will the purchase be made.
- **Funds Requested**: Provide the amount of federal funds you are requesting.

Other Justification

Describe the purpose of each item and how it is necessary for the completion of the project.

Indirect Costs

Indirect costs are not an allowable grant expense.

Program Income

Program income is gross income—earned by a recipient under a grant—directly generated by the grant-supported activity, or earned only because of the grant agreement, during the grant period of performance. Program income includes, but is not limited to, income from fees for services performed; the sale of commodities or items fabricated under an award; registration fees for conferences, etc.

To complete this section:

- **Source of Income:** Describe how program income will be generated by this project.
- **Description of how funds will be invested:** To solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops
- **Estimated Income:** How much income do you anticipate earning from the described source?

Program income may only be expended on allowable costs that solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

Expected Measurable Outcomes

(Appendix D)

Applicants whose proposals are selected to for inclusion in the state packet will work with MDA staff to construct at least one distinct, quantifiable, measurable project outcome. Details on the

development of outcome measures are outlined in appendix D to this manual**. Applicants are not required to have identified a performance measure at the time of submitting their application.**

Next Steps

After submitting the Grant Proposal Packet the Webgrants system will notify you of receipt. MDA encourages all Applicants to submit proposals at least one week prior to the due date to ensure on-time receipt. If you do not receive a notification of receipt within 24 hours of the due date, contact SCBG Program Manager.

Confidential Information

After grant awards have been made, all Grant Proposal packets and the associated evaluations will be available to the public. PRIOR TO SUBMITTING a proposal to the Department any confidential information (including trade secrets, as defined by Mont. Code Ann. 30-14-402) you must send a written description of the information you believe is subject to confidentiality. Department legal staff will review the description to determine if the information is such that there is an individual privacy interest worthy of constitutional protection. If the privacy interest clearly exceeds the merits of public disclosure, the Department will furnish the applicant with a confidentially agreement to be signed and submitted with the constitutionally protected information. Information received pursuant to an approved confidentiality agreement will be available for review only by the SCGB Manager, the evaluation committee members, and Department legal counsel. Applicants shall pay all legal costs associated with defending a claim for confidentiality should another person or entity submit a “right to know” (open records) request.

Screening

Screening Team

The first step in the Funding process is screening. MDA’s Internal Screening Team reviews proposals according to the items in the Screening Criteria section below.

Screening Criteria

Criteria

- Are all required materials included in the application?
- Are all sections of the proposal complete?
- Is the applicant’s organization eligible to apply?
- Is the applicant eligible to receive federal funds (not suspended or debarred)?
- Is the application in compliance with applicable federal and state regulations and in alignment with this notice?
- If a current SCBG grantee, are all invoicing and reporting current?
- If a previous grantee, has the organization to successfully complete past projects?
- Does the proposed project enhance the competitiveness of the specialty crops?

- Does the Proposal clearly define a challenge that is facing today's specialty crop industry and indicate a project which will assist in finding a solution?
- Does the applicant have the background and ability to successfully manage and complete the proposed project?

If the screening team answers no to any of the above questions the application will be removed from competition.

Screening Results

Grant Proposals passing Screening will proceed to Evaluation. Grant Proposals that do not pass screening will not receive further consideration for an award. Neither the Screening Team, nor MDA is required to recommend funding a project that does not sufficiently satisfy the screening criteria, even if there are remaining grant funds.

SCBG Program Manager will notify all Applicants of the results of the screening process within 30 days of the due date. Applicants may protest the screening decision of a rejected proposal as described in the Request for reconsideration section of this manual.

The second step in the funding decision process is Evaluation.

Evaluation

Evaluation Workgroup

MDA will send applications that pass screening to the Evaluation Workgroup. MDA selects the Evaluation Workgroup based on expertise and geographic distribution. In order to ensure high quality and fair reviews the evaluation workgroup will consist of technical experts from various fields.

Conflict of Interest

Individuals selected for the evaluation workgroup are responsible for notifying MDA staff of any potential conflict of interest, real or apparent, with any applicant requesting funding. MDA Legal staff will review all disclosed conflicts of interest to determine whether a conflict of interest exists. If a conflict exists, the workgroup member will be recused from participating in the decision process on the conflicted application. All workgroup members will certify that they are free from any conflict of interest.

Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation workgroup will use the Evaluation Criteria below to rate the Grant Proposal packets and make recommendations for funding to MDA's Director.

Category	Points possible	Assessment areas
Project purpose	30	• Does the applicant define the need for and purpose of the project? • Is the project important and timely? • Are the project objectives clear and appropriate?
Potential Impact	40	• Does the applicant define a specific group of specialty crop industry beneficiaries? • Does the applicant provide a reasonable estimate of the number of beneficiaries that will be impacted? • Does the applicant describe how beneficiaries will be impacted by the project? • Do they show that the project will improve upon the current conditions that are facing producers? • Does the applicant demonstrate that the project will have a significant economic impact for the specialty crop industry?
Outreach	10	Does the applicant present a plan to share information from this project with specialty crop growers and stakeholders?
Project Support	10	Does the applicant demonstrate that they have engaged critical stakeholders that will help to ensure the success and impact of the project?
Budget	10	• Is the amount requested reasonable? • Are line items reasonable and appropriate? • Does the budget narrative adequately explain the line items?

Scoring Matrix

Members of the grant review workgroup will be given the table below as guidance for scoring applications.

Points Possible	Unacceptable	Acceptable	Good	Excellent
40	<21	21-30	31-36	37-40
30	<16	16-23	24-27	28-30
10	<6	6-7	8-9	10

Applications will be ranked based on the consensus scores of the grant review workgroup. Rankings will be presented to the MDA Director who will make the final determination regarding which applications will be recommended to USDA-AMS for funding.

The third step in the funding decision process is review and recommendation by the MDA Director.

Director's Recommendation

The MDA Director (or their designee) will make all final decisions on which applications are submitted to USDA. In making their decision, the Director will utilize the Evaluation workgroup's ranking of applications, the funding priorities identified in this packet and any other materials they may deem pertinent.

SCBG Program Manager will notify all Applicants of the results of the Evaluation process and inclusion in the Director's decision within 90 days of the application due date.

USDA-AMS Approval

Applications selected by the Director for submission to to USDA-AMS for final review. USDA-AMS will conduct a review to ensure proposals meet the statutory purpose of the program, are in accordance with regulations and costs are allowable. USDA-AMS may require additional information from Applicants at this time; failure to provide the requested information in a timely manner may result in loss of funding.

Once all administrative and programmatic issues have been resolved, USDA-AMS will notify MDA and the SCBG Program Manager will notify Applicants of the results. MDA anticipates that grant awards and notifications will be made in late September 2018.

The last step in the funding process is a formal grant contract agreement.

Grant Agreement

Once official notification of award is received from USDA-AMS, MDA staff will supply each grantee with a contract formalizing the relationship under which the project will be conducted. Grantees must sign and return the contract to MDA before funds can be drawn on the project. In signing the contract, the grantee agrees to complete the project as described in the final proposal accepted by USDA-AMS, this will include any agreed upon revisions between the grantee, MDA and USDA-AMS.

Requests for Reconsideration

Applicants who wish to have the results of Screening or Evaluation reconsidered may make such request based on substantive issues of fact concerning bias, discrimination, conflicts of interest, and/or non-compliance with procedures described in this Funding Notice.

The request for reconsideration must be submitted in writing to the Department of Agriculture SCGB Program Manager within 7 days following notification of the Screening or Evaluation results.

Requests for reconsideration must describe the substantive fact(s) concerning bias, discrimination, conflict of interest, or noncompliance that affected the screening or evaluation of their proposal.

MDA Legal Counsel and/or their designee will review the request for reconsideration to determine whether the claims made are substantiated and likely to have resulted in an inaccurate, inconsistent or unfair assessment of their proposal.

The applicant will be notified of the results of Legal Counsel's review within 7 days of the receipt of their request.

Should MDA Legal Counsel find that claims are substantiated, all application materials and accompanying request for reconsideration will be provided to the MDA Director prior to the selection of applications for inclusion in the state plan.

Appendix A Applicant Self-Assessment

Applicant Self-Assessment of Internal Controls and Risks

This form can be accessed in an open format at the following link:
http://agr.mt.gov/Portals/168/Documents/GrantsandLoans/SCBG/2018 Applicant Self-Assessment of Internal Controls and Risks.docx?ver=2017-12-15-104239-317

The Montana Department of Agriculture will use this form to assess the risk level of awarding a grant for each applicant. Answers will determine eligibility to apply for funding and the extent to which special conditions may be applied (such as reporting frequency, site visits, etc.) should a grant be awarded.

Company/Organization Name	
Grant Project Contact	
Project Title	
Date Prepared	

Staff Qualifications

3 or more	1-3	Less than 1	Internal Control
			How many years of experience does the person who would directly oversee this grant have?
			How many federal grants has the person who would directly oversee this grant worked with as key personnel?
Comments:			

Control Environment

Answer "yes" if activity in question applies to your organization. Each "no" answer indicates a potential weakness of internal controls. ***All "no" answers require an explanation****.*

Organizational Structure

Yes	N/A	No	Internal Control
			Do organizational policies exist delegating grant management responsibility among staff?
			In addition to program staff, are financial and management personnel involved in the day to day implementation of projects?
Comments:			

Internal Controls

Yes	N/A	No	Internal Control

			Are personnel policies in writing?
			Are processes in place to ensure that staff wages charged to the grant are reviewed and based on actual time and effort?
			Are policies, or other documentation, in place that clearly delegate authority within the organization and identify staff responsibilities?
			Are procedures in place to ensure that supervisors, financial staff and managers receive adequate training on federal grant management practices?
			Is a list of authorized check signers maintained?
			Are accounting policies in place to ensure that all organization expenses are accompanied source documentation?
			Does your organization have a written travel policy?
			Are written procurement policies maintained and followed by your organization?
			Do policies exist to separate accounting duties, such as the preparing and signing of checks?
			Are all records, checks, and supporting documents retained according to a written record retention policy complying with state and federal regulations?
			Are periodic (monthly, quarterly) reports of actual to budgeted spending prepared and reviewed by both accounting and grant staff?
			Does your accounting system track the receipt and disbursal of funds by each grant or source of funding?
Comments:			

Allowable Activities & Costs

Yes	N/A	No	Internal Control
			Are procedures in place to ensure that all expenditures of funds are allowable prior to the outlay of funds?
			Have personnel responsible for coding expenditures been trained on federal grant management?
			Are all grant documents made available to grant staff to ensure their ability to adequately review for the allowability of expenditures?
			Are periodic (monthly, quarterly) reviews of the status of actual to planned program performance prepared and reviewed by staff?
			Are the following duties generally performed by different people: preparing, reviewing and approving requests for reimbursement?
Comments:			

Equipment Management

This section is required only if you requested funds for Special Purpose Equipment in your proposal.

Yes	N/A	No	Internal Control
			Are fixed asset records maintained that adequately classify and identify individual items, as well as detailing their location?

			Is someone assigned responsibility to ensure that all equipment is properly maintained?
			Is insurance coverage maintained for grant purchased equipment?
Comments:			

Matching Funds & Program Income

This section is required only if you indicated Matching Funds or Program Income in your proposal.

Yes	N/A	No	Internal Control
			Does your organization use as standard form to document “in-kind” contributions?
			Are cash match contributions entered into your organizations accounting system?
			Are cash/check receipt policies and procedures clearly documented and communicated to personnel?
			Are there policies and procedures to provide for the appropriate use of program income?
Comments:			

Audit

Yes	N/A	No	Internal Control
			Does your organization expend $750,000 or more during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards?
			Does our organization engage in audits compliant with OMB Circular a-133?
			Was your previous audit free of significant findings?
			Have audits been conducted by a CPA or Licensed Public Accountant
			Are past audit reports kept on file?
Comments:			

Appendix B Application Narrative

This form can be accessed in an open format at the following link:
http://agr.mt.gov/Portals/168/Documents/GrantsandLoans/SCBG/2018 Application Narrative.docx?ver=2017-12-15-105344-143

View the Grant Proposal Manual for instructions and more information.

Cover Sheet

Organization Information				
Company/Organization Name				
DBA (if applicable)				
Business/Organization Type (select one)		Agricultural producer or processor		Local government agency
		Non-profit		College or university
		State government		Other
Tax ID #				
DUNS #				
Grant Project Contact				
Mailing Address				
Physical Address				
Phone				
Email				
Grant Management Contact				
Phone			Email	

Project Information									
Project Title (limited to fifteen words)									
Project Begin Date (9/30/18 or later)					Project End Date (No later than 9/29/21)				
Specific Specialty Crop benefiting from grant									
Will project benefit beginning farmers?*		Yes		No	Will project benefit socially disadvantaged farmers?		Yes		No
Is this a multi-state project?		Yes		No	List partnering state(s)				

****Beginning farmers*** - individuals or entities who have not operated a farm for more than 10 years and substantially participates in the operation.

****Socially disadvantaged farmers -** means a farmer who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group. A "Socially Disadvantaged Group" is a group whose members have been subject to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program

Narrative

Abstract

Include a project summary of 250 words or less, suitable for dissemination to the public. It should include:

1. *The name of the applicant organization*
2. *A concise outline the project's outcome(s), and*
3. *A description of the general tasks to be completed during the project period to fulfill reach outcomes.*

Project Purpose

1. **What is the specific issue, problem or need**?
   - What is the problem or need that you are trying to address?
   - Why is the project important and timely?
   - Demonstrate that this is an issue of importance to specialty crop stakeholders and/or that they have sought or encouraged your involvement in finding a solution.

2. **What are the objectives of the project**? Provide general objectives outlining what you want to accomplish with this project, in the table provided in the application document.

Objective Name	Objective Description
1)	
2)	
3)	Tab through to add lines

Potential Impact

1. **Who are the beneficiaries of the project?** Be as specific as possible, describe the population affected and where they are located. Use statistics to describe the target population of the project.

2. **How many beneficiaries will be impacted?** The answer to this must include a number.

3. **How will the beneficiaries be impacted by the project?** Be specific and refer to the target population of the project. Discuss their current condition the ideal outcome of the project and how the activities performed will lead to reaching that goal.

Outreach

Describe how you will share the results of the project with specialty crop growers and other interested specialty crop stakeholders.

External Project Support

Describe the individuals and organizations that support the nature of the support they are providing.

Eligibility

By marking the box below, I confirm that this project **solely** enhances the competitiveness of specialty crops in accordance with and defined by 7 U.S.C. 1621. Further information regarding the definition of a specialty crop can be found at www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp.

Yes	

Continuation Project Info

Does the project build on a previously funded SCBG project?

If YES:

1. Describe how the project differs from and builds on the previous project.

2. Provide a summary (3 to 5 sentences) of the outcomes of the previous project(s).

3. **What was earned from implementing this project, including potential improvements?**

4. **How are the lessons-learned being incorporated to make the ongoing project more effective and successful at meeting goals and outcomes?**

5. Describe the likelihood of your efforts becoming self-sustaining and not indefinitely dependent on grant funds.

Other Support from Federal or State Grant Programs

Did you submit this project to a Federal or State grant program other than the SCBGP for funding and/or is a Federal or State grant program other than the SCBGP funding the project currently?

Yes		**No**	

If YES,

1. Identify which Federal and/or State grant program

2. **Describe how the SCBGP project differs from or supplements the other grant program(s) efforts.**

Project Funding

Provide the following information in this section:

1. **Would this project be possible without SCBG grant funds?** *(check one)*

	No, this project would not be possible without SCBG funds.
	Yes, this project would be possible without SCBG.

If NO, you are indicating that there are no other funding sources, public or private, available to fund this. No further explanation is necessary.

If YES, you are indicating that there are other funding sources, public or private, through which this project could be funded. For this, please provide an explanation regarding the source of funding that would be used for this project if SCBG funds were not granted.

Explain:	

2. **Could the outcomes of this project be accomplished with a reduced budget?** *(check all that apply)*

	No, this project would not be possible with a reduced budget.
	Yes, we would accept a reduced amount that, if granted, could still accomplish the outcomes of this project. **OR**
	Yes, we would accept a reduced amount, with corresponding reductions in outcomes.

If NO, you are indicating that the project could not be accomplished with a reduced budget (i.e. the funding decision must be "all or nothing").

If YES, be very specific in indicating which aspects of the project could be cut and the corresponding change dollar amount reduction to the overall budget. Also, indicate whether the Outcomes in your proposal would need to be adjusted.

Explain:	

Citations (Optional)

A list of citations may be added to the application but is strictly optional.

This form can be accessed in an open format at the following link:
http://agr.mt.gov/Portals/168/Documents/GrantsandLoans/SCBG/2018 Budget Narrative.xlsx?ver=2017-12-15-110411-727

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Budget Narrative| Federal Fiscal Year 2018 Funding Cycle

Please round totals to the next whole dollar.

Funding amount requested must be a minimum of $15,000; there is no maximum.

Personnel

List the organization's employees whose time and effort can be specifically identified and easily and accurately traced to project activities that solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

Name/Title:	Level of Effort (# of hours OR % FTE)	Funds Requested

Total Personnel Funds Requested $ -

Personnel Justification
For each individual, describe the activities to be completed by name/title including approximately when activities will occur. Add more personnel by copying and pasting the existing listing or deleting personnel that aren't necessary.

Personnel 1:	
Personnel 2:	

Fringe Benefits

Provide the fringe benefit rates for each of the project's salaried employees described in the Personnel section that will be paid with SCBGP funds.

Name/Title:	Fringe Benefit Rate Calculation:	Funds Requested

Total Fringe Funds Requested $ -

Travel

Explain the purpose for each trip request. Please note that travel costs are limited to those allowed by formal organizational policy; in the case of air travel, project participants must use the lowest reasonable commercial airfares. For recipient organizations that have no formal travel policy and for-profit recipients, allowable travel costs may not exceed those established by the Federal Travel Regulation, issued by GSA, including the maximum per diem and subsistence rates prescribed in those regulations. This information is available at http://www.gsa.gov.

Trip Destination:	Expense Type: (airfare, hotel, per diem, etc.)	Unit of Measure: (days, nights, miles)	# of Units:	Cost Per Unit:	# of Travelers Claiming expense	Funds Requested

Total Travel Funds Requested $ -

Travel Justification

For each trip, describe the purpose of the trip and how it will achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project. Be sure to include the approximate date of the trip.

Trip 1:	
Trip 2:	

By checking the box to the right, I confirm that my organization's established travel policies will be adhered to when completing the above-mentioned trips in accordance with 2 CFR 200.474 or 48 CFR subpart 31.2 as applicable.

Equipment

Describe any special purpose equipment to be purchased or rented under the grant. ‘‘Special purpose equipment’’ is tangible, nonexpendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds $5,000 per unit and is used only for research, medical, scientific, or other technical activities

Rental of "general purpose equipment’’ must also be described in this section. Purchase of general purpose equipment is not allowable under this grant.

Item Description:	Purchase or Rent?	Acquisition Date?	Funds Requested

Total Equipment Funds Requested $ -

Equipment Justification

For each Equipment item describe how this equipment will be used to achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project.

Equipment 1:	
Equipment 2:	

Supplies

List the materials, supplies, and fabricated parts costing less than $5,000 per unit and describe how they will support the purpose and goal of the proposal and solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

Item Description:	Per Unit Cost	# of Units	Acquisition Date?	Funds Requested

Total Supplies Funds Requested $ -

Supplies Justification

Describe the purpose of each supply listed and how it is necessary for the completion of the project's objective(s) and outcome(s).

Item 1:	
Item 2:	

Contractual

Contractual/consultant costs are the expenses associated with purchasing goods and/or procuring services performed by an individual or organization other than the applicant in the form of a procurement relationship. If there is more than one contractor or consultant, each must be described separately. (Repeat this section for each contract/consultant.).

Contractor:	Hourly Rate/Flat Rate:	Funds Requested

Contractual Justification

For each contractor describe the activities and how they meet the objectives and outcomes of the project. Include timelines for each activity.

If contracted employee or consultant hourly rates of pay exceed the salary of a GS-15 step 10 Federal employee in your area (for more information please go to https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/), provide a justification for the expenses. This limit does not include fringe benefits, travel, indirect costs, or other expenses.

Contractor/Consultant 1:	
Contractor/Consultant 2:	
Contractor/Consultant 3:	

By checking the box to the right, I confirm that my organization followed the same policies and procedures used for procurements from non-federal sources, which reflect applicable State and local laws and regulations and conform to the Federal laws and standards identified in 2 CFR Part 200.317 through.326, as applicable. If the contractor(s)/consultant(s) are not already selected, my organization will follow the same requirements.

Total Contractual Funds Requested $0

Other

Include any expenses not covered in any of the previous budget categories. Be sure to break down costs into cost/unit. Expenses in this section include, but are not limited to, meetings and conferences, communications, rental expenses, advertisements, publication costs, and data collection.

If you budget meal costs for reasons other than meals associated with travel per diem, provide an adequate justification to support that these costs are not entertainment costs.

Item description:	Per-Unit Cost:	Number of Units:	Acquisition Date:	Funds Requested

Other Justification

Describe the purpose of each item purchased and how it is necessary for the completion of the project's objective(s) and outcome(s).

Total Other Funds Requested	$ -
Total Funds Requested	$ -

Program Income

Program income is gross income—earned by a recipient under a grant—directly generated by the grant-supported activity, or earned only because of the grant agreement, during the grant period of performance. Program income includes, but is not limited to, income from fees for services performed; the sale of commodities or items fabricated under an award; registration fees for conferences, etc.

Source of Income	Description of how you will reinvest the program income into the project to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops	Estimated Income

Appendix D Expected Measurable Outcomes

The information below is provided for reference only. Applicants selected by MDA to receive funding will work with department staff on the development of performance measures specific to their project.

Implementation of National Outcomes

For each project, the applicant must select one or more of the outcomes below depending on the applicability to the project and at least one indicator under each outcome selected. If the outcomes below are not applicable to the project, the applicant must develop an outcome and at least one indicator that will be reviewed by AMS staff. Recipients must report on the progress of each outcome in Annual and Final Performance Reports. AMS will aggregate this information and report to OMB and Congress on these national outcome measures.

Outcome Measures

Outcome 1: To enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increased sales

THIS IS MANDATORY FOR ALL MARKETING AND PROMOTION PROJECTS.

Outcome Definition:
Marketing and Promotion

Marketing and promotion projects focus efforts to sell, advertise, promote, market, and generate publicity, attract new customers, or raise customer awareness for specialty crops or a specialty crop venue. These include, but are not limited to:

- Uses of social media to market and promote;
- Specialty crop local, regional and national campaigns;
- Specialty crop only tradeshows;
- Website promotion and development;
- Use/development of billboards, radio, television, magazine and email ads, marketing materials such as direct mail, brochures;
- Agritourism;
- Export market development;
- Retail promotions including point-of-purchase items, labels, packaging etc.;
- Farmers market promotions; and
- Marketing and promotion campaigns with an education component directed to consumers.

The specific measure must be expressed as a dollar value and percentage increase in sales of one or more specialty crops in one or more States or foreign markets as a result of marketing and/or promotion activities. For example, an expected outcome of growth in sales from 5% to 10% is not acceptable by itself, but in combination with an increase in sales of $1 million to $2 million it is acceptable. This requirement means that an established baseline of sales in dollars must should already exist at the time of application. For projects that do not already have a baseline of sales in dollars, one of the objectives of the project must be to determine such a baseline in order to meet the requirement to document the value of sales increases by the end of the project.

Indicator: Sales increased from $_____ to $_____ and by _____ percent, as result of marketing and/or promotion activities

AMS understands that sales can be impacted by a host of unrelated issues including trade disputes, phytosanitary issues, export conditions, weather, and other factors affecting the farmer, supply chain, retailers, wholesalers and/or consumers. The above factors demonstrate that even a perfectly executed marketing campaign can result in sales

remaining constant or even declining. These factors and events that either positively or negatively impacted the sales of a project can be explained in the performance report.

Outcome 2: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increased consumption

Indicators:

1. Of the _____total number of children and youth reached,
    a. The number that gained knowledge about eating more specialty crops
    b. The number that reported an intention to eat more specialty crops
    c. The number that reported eating more specialty crops
2. Of the ____total number of adults reached,
    a. The number that gained knowledge about eating more specialty crops
    b. The number that reported an intention to eat more specialty crops
    c. The number that reported eating more specialty crops
3. Number of new and improved technologies and processes to enhance the nutritional value and consumer acceptance of specialty crops (excluding patents) _____
4. Number of new specialty crops and/or specialty crop products introduced to consumers____

Outcome 3: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increased access and awareness

Indicators:

1. Of the _____total number of consumers or wholesale buyers reached,
    a. The number that gained knowledge on how to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops
    b. The number that reported an intention to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops
    c. The number that reported supplementing their diets with specialty crops that they produced/preserved/obtained/prepared
2. Of the ____total number of individuals (culinary professionals, institutional kitchens, specialty crop entrepreneurs such as kitchen incubators/shared-use kitchens, etc.) reached,
    a. The number that gained knowledge on how to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops
    b. The number that reported an intention to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops
    c. The number that reported supplementing their diets with specialty crops that they produced/prepared/preserved/obtained
3. Number of existing delivery systems/access points of those reached that expanded and/or improved offerings of specialty crops
    a. _____farmers markets
    b. _____produce at corner stores
    c. _____school food programs and other food options (vending machines, school events, etc.)
    d. _____grocery stores
    e. _____wholesale markets
    f. _____food hubs that process, aggregate, distribute, or store specialty crops
    g. _____home improvement centers with lawn and garden centers
    h. _____lawn and garden centers
    i. _____other systems/access points, not noted
    j. _____total (if not reported above)
4. Number of new delivery systems/access points offering specialty crops
    a. _____farmers markets
    b. _____produce at corner stores
    c. _____school food programs and other food options (vending machines, school events, etc.)
    d. _____grocery stores

e. _____wholesale markets
f. _____ food hubs that process, aggregate, distribute, or store specialty crops
g. _____home improvement centers with lawn and garden centers
h. _____lawn and garden centers
i. _____other systems/access points, not noted
j. _____total (if not reported above)

Outcome 4: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops though greater capacity of sustainable practices of specialty crop production resulting in increased yield, reduced inputs, increased efficiency, increased economic return, and/or conservation of resources.

Indicators:

1. Numbers of plant/seed releases (i.e., cultivars, drought-tolerant plants, organic, enhanced nutritional composition, etc.) _____
2. Adoption of best practices and technologies resulting in increased yields, reduced inputs, increased efficiency, increased economic return, and conservation of resources (select at least one below).
    a. Number of growers/producers indicating adoption of recommended practices_____
    b. Number of growers/producers reporting reduction in pesticides, fertilizer, water used/acre _____
    c. Number of producers reporting increased dollar returns per acre or reduced costs per acre _____
    d. d. Number of acres in conservation tillage or acres in other best management practices_____
3. Number of habitat acres established and maintained for the mutual benefit of pollinators and specialty crops_____

Outcome 5: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through more sustainable, diverse, and resilient specialty crop systems

Indicators:

1. Number of new or improved innovation models (biological, economic, business, management, etc.), technologies, networks, products, processes, etc. developed for specialty crop entities including producers, processors, distributors, etc. _____
2. Number of innovations adopted _____
3. Number of specialty crop growers/producers (and other members of the specialty crop supply chain) that have increased revenue expressed in dollars _____
4. Number of new diagnostic systems analyzing specialty crop pests and diseases._____
   [Diagnostic systems refer to, among other things: labs, networks, procedures, access points.]
5. Number of new diagnostic technologies available for detecting plant pests and diseases. _____
   [The intent here is not to count individual pieces of equipment or devices, but to enumerate technologies that add to the diagnostic capacity.]
6. Number of first responders trained in early detection and rapid response to combat plant pests and diseases_____
7. Number of viable technologies/processes developed or modified that will increase specialty crop distribution and/or production_____
8. Number of growers/producers that gained knowledge about science-based tools through outreach and education programs _____

Outcome 6: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increasing the number of viable technologies to improve food safety

Indicators:

1. Number of viable technologies developed or modified for the detection and characterization of specialty crop supply contamination from foodborne threats ____
2. Number of viable prevention, control and intervention strategies for all specialty crop production scales for foodborne threats along the production continuum_____
3. Number of individuals who learn about prevention, detection, control, and intervention food safety practices and number of those individuals who increase their food safety skills and knowledge_____
4. Number of improved prevention, detection, control, and intervention technologies_____
5. Number of reported changes in prevention, detection, control, and intervention strategies_____

Outcome 7: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increased understanding of threats to food safety from microbial and chemical sources

Indicators:

Number of projects focused on:

1. Increased understanding of fecal indicators and pathogens _____
2. Increased safety of all inputs into the specialty crop chain _____
3. Increased understanding of the roles of humans, plants and animals as vectors _____
4. Increased understanding of preharvest and postharvest process impacts on microbial and chemical threats _____
5. Number of growers or producers obtaining on-farm food safety certifications (such as Good Agricultural Practices or Good Handling Practices) _____

Outcome 8: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through enhancing or improving the economy as a result of specialty crop development.

Indicators:

1. Number of new rural careers created _____
2. Number of new urban careers created _____
3. Number of jobs maintained/created_____
4. Number of small businesses maintained/created _____
5. Increased revenue/increased savings/one-time capital purchases (in dollars) _____
6. Number of new beginning farmers who went into specialty crop production _____
7. Number of socially disadvantaged famers who went into specialty crop production_____

Additional information:

- Difference between "jobs" and "careers": jobs are net gain of paid employment; new businesses created or adopted can indicate new careers.
- Beginning Farmer is an individual or entity that has not operated a farm or ranch for more than 10 years and substantially participates in the operation.
- Socially Disadvantaged Farmer is a farmer who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group. A Socially Disadvantaged Group is a group whose members have been subject to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.