**MDA 2022 Specialty Crop Block Grant Awardees**

**Helena, Mont.** – The Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) and U.S> Department of Agriculture (USDA) have partnered to announce the recipients of the state’s $3.071 million investment in projects through the Montana Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) program.

 “*The quality of Montana’s agricultural products and the producers raising them are unmatched*,” said Montana Department of Agriculture Director Christy Clark. “*These grants support vital research and outreach efforts that directly benefit Montana’s farmers and ranchers to diversify, innovate, and grow their operations*.”

**2022 SCBG AWARDS**

**Montana State University-Bozeman has been awarded the following:**

* A $168,176 award for “The Regional Pulse Crop Diagnostic Lab: Serving Montana Pulse Growers”. Primary Investigator Carmen Murphy.
* A $444,174 award for “Predicting soilborne disease risk of pulse crops”. Primary Investigator Carmen Murphy.
* A $110,214 award for “Sniffing out PVY. Using dogs to detect PVY in potatoes”. Primary Investigator Nina Zidack.
* A $157,583 award for “Agronomic Strategies and Cultivar Selection for Production of High Protein Field Pea”. Primary Investigator Chengci Chen.
* A $402,273 award for “Building Specialty Crops Water Management network (SCWMN) for Drought Resiliency in Montana”. Primary Investigator Paul Nugent.
* A $361,303 award for “Understanding Cold-Hardy Berry Phenology and Physiology to Improve Cultivar Selection, Management, and Harvestability”. Primary Investigator Andrej Svyantek.
* A $439,452 award for “Field Evaluation of Pulse Crop Breeding Lines in Montana”. Primary Investigator Kevin McPhee.
* A $186,634 award for “Enhancing Pea Tolerance Against Drought Stress Using Beneficial Bacteria”. Primary Investigator Qing Yan.
* A $389,054 award for “From Traditional to Unique Wines – Strategies to Improve Montana’s Fermentation of Novel, Local fruits”. Primary Investigator Zhouyu Wang.
* A $184,622 award for “Post-harvest Processing to Improve Health Attributes and Economic Value of Small-Fruit”. Primary Investigator Zhouyu Wang.

The Specialty Crop Block Program also supported a grant for $33,870 for “Montana Berry Growers Association Education and Marketing Grant” for the Montana Berry Growers Association.

The Montana Department of Agriculture is serving Montana Agriculture and growing prosperity under the Big Sky. For more information on department programs and services, visit agr.mt.gov.