

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Montana Cherry Research & Market Development Program

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
Montana Department of Agriculture

Return all proposals to:

Montana Cherry Advisory Committee
Montana Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Development Division
PO Box 200201
Helena, Montana 59620-0201
(406) 444-2402

Proposals shall be received on or before March 24, 2015

Legal Authority:

(MCA) Section 80-11-510 Montana Code Annotated
(ARM) Section 4.6.301-303 Administrative Rules of Montana

MONTANA CHERRY RESEARCH & MARKET DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

PURPOSE : The primary goal of the Montana Cherry Research & Market Development Program as stated in the enabling legislation, "In order to protect and foster the health, prosperity, and general welfare of the people of Montana, it is declared to be the public policy of this state to encourage and promote intensive, scientific, and practical research into all phases of agricultural commodity culture, production, marketing, and the development of markets for commodities grown or produced in Montana."

INTRODUCTION

The Montana Cherry Advisory Committee invites proposals to fund demonstration projects, applied research and market development projects designed to address Montana's cherry industry needs and opportunities. All research & marketing project applications will be reviewed by the Advisory Committee at the first regular meeting each year and a recommendation made to the department, which projects they would like funded and the amount of funding suggested. Recommended projects will be determined by amount of funds, type of project, need and whether the project is new or on going. Generally, to qualify for consideration, proposals must have practical, near-term application involving practices or organizational arrangements that will stimulate an expanded cherry industry.

Proposals submitted under this RFP must be received on or before March 24, 2015

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APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Proposals for funding will be accepted from:

- Public and Private Agencies and Organizations
- Business and Industry
- Educational Institutions
- Local Governments
- Individuals

If two or more individuals or organizations propose to conduct a project jointly, they should submit one application as co-applicants.

Employees of the Montana Department of Agriculture and their immediate families, and members of the Montana Cherry Advisory Committee and their immediate families are

excluded from eligibility for funding under this program. Immediate family includes mother, father, brother, sister, spouse and children.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Eligible projects are as follows:

- Conducting research programs to:
 - improve the quality of the cherry crop
 - develop and improve control measures for disease and pests which attack the cherry crop
 - other research projects designed to improve the Cherry industry
- Disseminating current and new research information
- Developing the Cherry markets, including:
 - conducting market assessments
 - planning and conducting publicity and sales promotion campaigns, including media development and trade show exhibition.

ELIGIBLE COSTS

There is no limit to the grant amount a proposal can request. However, on average, the Committee has \$15,000 annually for grant proposals; therefore, grant amounts should correspond. Eligible costs under the Montana Cherry Research & Market Development Program may include, but are not limited to:

- Salaries and Wages
- Fringe Benefits
- Consultant Services (professional, technical, operational)
- Travel
- Advertising and Promotion
- Equipment (preferably leased versus direct acquisition)
- Supplies and Materials
- Communication (telephone, postage, printing, etc.)
- Data Processing

Program funds cannot be used for the payment of institutional overhead or other indirect costs such as use of land, buildings or equipment. These costs can be used, however, in calculating the applicant match. (see CURRENT AND PENDING SUPPORT section for more information on match).

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals under the Montana Cherry Research & Market Development Program must be submitted to the Montana Cherry Advisory Committee at the address listed on the transmittal page of this RFP. **An original copy of the proposal must be received on or before March 24, 2015.** Applicants are responsible for timely submission of proposals.

In order to be considered, proposals must be responsive to the objectives identified in this RFP. Each proposal must be limited to one project or activity only, the title of which must appear on the cover sheet of the application.

The purpose of the proposal application is to provide evaluators with a written statement containing sufficient information to demonstrate that the proposed activity is a sound approach to an important area of interest as outlined in the RFP and that it merits financial support. The Committee will conduct their annual meeting in early April at which time the applicant may make a presentation in person. The Council will then make a decision whether or not to fund the project and notify the applicant within 30 days.

PROPOSAL TIMELINE

Request for Proposal Published	Monday, February 23, 2015
Deadline to submit proposal	Tuesday, March 24, 2015
Committee meeting (tentative)	Thursday, April 23, 2015
Grants awarded	April – June, 2015
Award duration (first year)	July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

PROPOSAL FORMAT

Proposals shall be brief but thorough and conform to the format described below.

COVER SHEET

- Title of proposed project
- Name and title of applicant(s)
- Address, telephone number, and email of applicant(s)
- Duration of proposed project (include beginning and ending dates)
- Name, address, telephone number, and email of contact person if other than applicant(s)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Briefly describe the specific problem, need or opportunity to be addressed, the project objectives, a description of the effort and the project's intended benefits. The overall background and approach should be indicated as well as the role the project will play in achieving the objectives identified in this RFP.

The proposal should demonstrate the potential for near-term application of technologies, practices and/or organizational arrangements that will be developed as a result of the project.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

A clear, concise description of the objectives of the proposed activity is required. Consistency with the objectives of the program as indicated in the RFP is critical. A guide for developing objectives is as follows:

- State your objectives in quantifiable terms.
- State your objectives in terms of outcomes, not process.
- Objectives should specify the result of an activity.
- Objectives should identify the target audience being served.
- Objectives need to be realistic and capable of being accomplished within the grant period.

DELIVERABLES

Deliverables are the anticipated end product of the proposed project, which will make it useful. This section should clearly describe the deliverables and indicate how these deliverables will be made available and benefit the cherry industry, after the project is completed.

In addition to a written presentation of findings and recommendations, deliverables may be provided in a number of forms including, but not limited to one or more of the following:

- publication of "how to" guidelines or instructions
- an analysis of economic, scientific or production feasibility for a specific development project
- publication and implementation of a management, business, or marketing plan
- an audio-visual presentation of a new product or technique or methodology, or marketing and promotion effort

PLAN OF WORK

Provide a detailed description of how the proposed project is to be carried out. The plan should indicate the tasks to be performed, who will carry them out, where they will be conducted, and a timetable for completion. The Committee allows project durations of up to two years, though the committee would consider longer projects if sufficient need is demonstrated.

POTENTIAL USE

The practical or commercial application of the proposed project activity is important. This section should indicate the means by which the proposed project activity appears to have potential application or may be broadly identified and quantified to the maximum extent possible.

KEY PERSONNEL

This section should identify the key people who will be involved in carrying out the proposed project activity and their qualifications for doing so. Qualifications of project participants will be an important consideration in granting funds.

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

This section should briefly describe the facilities and equipment, if any, required to carry out the proposed work. Items to be purchased with grant funds should be fully described and justified in this section. Pertinent equipment sales materials and price quotes should be included with the application.

CURRENT AND PENDING SUPPORT

Though matching funds are not required for consideration, projects with matching funds may have an advantage in the competitive selection process. The project sponsor or other supporter(s) may provide the match. This section shall identify other sources of funds or resources, including private, State, and Federal funds, when they were received or when they are expected to be received. This section should demonstrate evidence of industry support, including letters of support from cherry growers, and sellers.

PROPOSED BUDGET

A Proposed Budget (form attached) must be completed for each project submitted and indicate how the grant funds would be used by expenditure category, as well as the amount or value of the applicant's matching contribution.

The Montana Department of Agriculture reserves the right to audit an applicant's books and records relating to the performance of the project during and up to seven (7) years after completion of the project.

SELECTION PROCESS

Selection of successful proposals will be on a competitive basis and based on availability of funds. All proposals will be judged against the following criteria, consistent with the stated objectives of the program:

- The degree to which the proposed activity addresses a significant industry need or opportunity and evidence of industry support of such an activity.
- Applicant's demonstrated experience and ability to undertake the proposed activity and to manage the grant compliance, including reporting and financial management.
- The adequacy of plan and time frame to achieve the activity goals.

The Montana Cherry Advisory Committee and Montana Department of Agriculture reserve the right to make selection decisions for all proposals.

AWARDS

The Montana Cherry Advisory Committee will fund successful projects through contracts under the Agricultural Commodity Research and Market Development Enabling Act. Selected projects must comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, licensing and regulations for funds to be awarded. Evidence of such compliance may be required.

The Montana Department of Agriculture will notify each applicant of selection decisions in writing within 30 days of the annual meeting.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Committee and Department reserve the right to determine the extent of reporting requirements, subject to modification in the course of the project. At a minimum, semi-annual and final reports will be required, as follows:

- January 31 (for the period 7/1 – 12/31)

- July 31 (for the period 1/1 – 6/30)
- A comprehensive final report will be required upon completion of the project.

Report forms will be provided to grantees upon confirmation of selection. Grantees are responsible for timely submission of reports.

OWNERSHIP AND PUBLICATION OF MATERIALS

All information and materials generated by the proposed activity become the sole property of the State of Montana. The grant recipient will retain the right to utilize, reprint and distribute all said information and materials.

LIABILITY

Neither the Montana Cherry Advisory Committee nor the Montana Department of Agriculture will be held liable for any costs incurred by any firm for work performed in the preparation of and production of a proposal or for any works performed prior to the formal execution of a contract.

RIGHT TO KNOW

Proposals selected for funding and all related contracts shall be subject to disclosure under the Montana Right to Know Law.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Cherry Advisory Committee and Department reserve the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals received in respect to this RFP
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification and concurrence of applicant
- Clarify the scope of this RFP, within the program requirements and with appropriate notice to all applicants, to best serve the interests of the state of Montana.

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PROPOSED BUDGET

PROJECT TITLE: _____

PROJECT APPLICANT: _____

PRINCIPAL CONTACT: _____

PROJECT DURATION: _____

EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	GRANT FUNDS REQUEST	APPLICANT MATCH	TOTAL
Salaries and Wages			
Fringe Benefits			
Consultant Services			
Travel			
Advertising & Promotion			
Equipment			
Supplies & Materials			
Communications			
Data Processing			
Indirect and Overhead	XXXXXXXXXX		
Other (Specify)			
TOTAL			