Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Grant Proposal Manual

Federal Fiscal Year 2016 Funding Cycle

Grant Proposal Due Date:

February 24, 2016, 2:00 p.m.

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) 2016 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – Grant Proposal Manual.

December 23, 2015

Dear Grant Applicant:

The Montana Department of Agriculture is pleased to present the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBG) Grant Manual. The purpose of this program is solely to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops in Montana. For purposes of the program, specialty crops are defined as fruits, vegetables, peas, lentils, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture).

This manual is designed to instruct Applicants in preparing successful Grant Proposal packets for funding assistance from the Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA) for Specialty Crop Block Grant revenues**. Please take the time to read this grant manual carefully and follow all given instructions. Grant Proposals not following the guidelines shall be deemed ineligible.** You are strongly encouraged to communicate with industry representatives or stakeholders that may be affected by your Grant Proposal so that they are aware of your efforts.

The Montana Department of Agriculture anticipates that grant monies will be available to successful Applicants by late 2016. This manual contains general program information, criteria rating system, and Grant Proposal packet requirements. Completed Grant Proposals are due no later than **2 p.m. on Wednesday, February 24, 2016.**

Thank you for your interest in this important program and we look forward to receiving your Grant Proposal packet.

Sincerely,

Ron de Yong
Director

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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 $1,302,229.90.

MDA plans to award multiple grants from these funds for this grant cycle. While MDA's Director makes the preliminary decisions on selecting projects, **USDA will make the final decision concerning grant awards**.

SCBG Contact Information

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

Critical Dates

Date	Time*	Event	Venue
December 23, 2015	5:00 PM	Post Notice of Funding	MDA Website
February 3, 2016	1:00 PM	SCBG Overview	Go To Meeting**
February 17, 2016	1:00 PM	Open Question and Answer	Go to Meeting**

February 24, 2016	2:00 PM	Applications Due to MDA	Webgrants
End of March	TBD	Grant review meeting	MDA-Helena

*All times in Mountain Standard Time

**Call in 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 Parts 1290 and 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

Commonly recognized specialty crops are fruits, vegetables, peas, lentils, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture). View the List of crops commonly considered for a more comprehensive listing of eligible and ineligible crops.

Eligible plants must be intensively cultivated and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification to be considered specialty crops. 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. While single entities are eligible, a requirement of the program is that projects must also benefit more than one commercial product, organization, or individual.

Solely Enhance Specialty Crops

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

Examples of enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops include, but are not limited to: research, promotion, marketing, nutrition, trade enhancement, food safety, food security, plant health programs, education, ‘‘buy local’’ programs, increased consumption, increased innovation, improved efficiency and

reduced costs of distribution systems, environmental concerns and conservation, product development, and developing cooperatives.

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. Single organizations, institutions, and individuals are encouraged to participate as project partners.

Duration

Proposed projects should start no earlier than October 1, 2016 and end no later than June 30, 2019.

Minimum & Maximum Amount

Funding amount requested must be a minimum of $30,000; there is no maximum.

DUNS Number

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

Entity, as it is used in this section, means all of the following, as defined at 2 CFR Part 25, subpart C:

- A governmental organization, which is a State, local government, or Indian Tribe;
- A foreign public entity;
- A domestic or foreign nonprofit organization;
- A domestic or foreign for-profit organization; and
- A federal agency receiving an award under MDA.

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 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, in the judgment of MDA staff, failed to adequately deliver on the conditions of that funding. Failure to perform may include, but is not limited to:

- Demonstrated inability to responsibly manage funds
- Demonstrated 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;
- assisting all entities in the specialty crop distribution chain in 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; and development of organic and sustainable production practices;
- increasing child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops;
- improving efficiency and reducing costs of distribution systems;
- developing local and regional food systems; and
- improving food access in underserved communities.

Projects that support the increase 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 Grants Program.

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 and Local Food Promotion Program at http://www.ams.usda.gov/fmpp.

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 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.
- An entity requests grant funds to make grants 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 membership in the organization.

Examples of Acceptable Projects

- A university requests funds to conduct 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.
- 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.
- A single company requests funds to provide a viable pollination alternative to specialty crop stakeholders in a region that currently does not have one.
- A single non-profit organization requests funds to conduct an advertising campaign that will benefit their specialty crop members.
- A single farmer erects 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.

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
- Commercial seed production
- Organic and non-organic food production
- Use of beneficial organisms

Supporting Research in the areas of Specialty Crop:

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

Planning and supporting Infrastructures that creates or supports Specialty Crop:

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

Increasing Consumer Awareness of the Value of Specialty Crops through Education

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

To provide solutions to problems that cross state boundaries, multi-state projects are encouraged. Examples of multi-state projects may be: addressing good agricultural practices, research on crop productivity or quality, enhancing access to federal nutrition programs, pest and disease management, or commodity-specific projects addressing common issues in multi-state regions.

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 on the Grant Proposal cover sheet.

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

A high-quality multi-state project Proposal demonstrates the following information and procedures:

1. The objectives are clearly focused.
2. Each participant listed has direct involvement in the accomplishment of the stated objectives.
3. The project is multi-state.
4. The project proposal has been peer-reviewed.
5. The proposed project is oriented toward accomplishment of specific outcomes and impacts and based on the priorities developed from stakeholder input.
6. The Proposal describes how the States are going to collaborate effectively within the project.
7. Each State participating in the project submits the project in their State Plan indicating which State is taking the coordinating role and the percent of the budget covered by each State.

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 specialty crop block grant webpage. At:

http://agr.mt.gov/agr/Programs/GrantsLoans/SCBG/Grant_Proposal.html

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 **2p.m. Wednesday, February 24, 2016**. **Late applications will not be accepted.**

Project Operating Dates

Proposed projects should start no earlier than October 1, 2016 and end no later than June 30, 2019.

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.

Grantee Self-Assessment (Appendix A)

Finally, grantees will be required to complete the grantee self-assessment form provided in Appendix A. The intent of this form is to inform the screening team of the capacity of the applying organization to effectively manage federal grants. The information contained in this form will not be scored.

Instructions for the Proposal template

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 Subrecipient with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award 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. These responsibilities include accountability both for the appropriate use of awarded funds and the performance of the grant-supported project or activities as specified in the approved application.

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 October 1, 2016. ~~This must match the Work Plan.~~ 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 June 30, 2019. ~~This must match the Work Plan.~~

Specific Specialty Crop deriving benefit from grant

Indicate the specific specialty crop (e.g. "iceberg lettuce" instead of "vegetables" or "lettuce"). A list of eligible crops is available at List of crops commonly considered.

Area of Focus

Indicate the proposed project's area of focus by checking all boxes that apply.

Special Project Features

Will this project have a substantial focus on benefiting:

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

- **Socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers -** a farmer or rancher 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 ~~the need for the project, a brief description of the goals and outcomes, and your plan for evaluating and measuring the success of the project or program.~~:

1. *The name of the applicant organization that if awarded a grant will establish an agreement or contractual relationship with the State department of agriculture to lead and execute the project,*
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 this goal.*

Project Purpose:

Fill in the boxes provided to answer the questions below.

1. **What is the specific issue, problem or need to be addressed by the project**? What is it that you are trying to solve or fix? 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.

   Example: "The Montana Specialty Crop Association, during their annual meeting, indicated that GAP training was of great importance to continued expansion of their markets. The president indicated to me that GAP training is expensive and difficult to coordinate, that they do not have the staff to do so, and that they would like us to do this for them."

2. ~~**Why is the project important and timely**? Describe how the identified problem or need is affecting Montana and why the timing of the proposed project is critical.~~

   ~~Example: "GAP certification is quickly becoming an industry standard demand for retailers and wholesalers purchasing agricultural products. The Montana Specialty Crop Association indicated that 90% of their buyers require GAP certification of all growers before they will accept them as a vendor."~~

3. **What are the objectives of the project**? Provide general objectives, what you want to accomplish with this project~~. In addition to providing a narrative of objectives, objectives must be organized,~~ in the table provided in the application document.

Example: "We want to provide GAP training for the Montana Specialty Crop Association, obtaining GAP certification for their members, and increasing their regional retail market share."

Citations (optional)

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

Eligibility

1. ~~**Does the project have the potential to enhance the competitiveness of non-specialty crops?**~~ ~~Examples of how a project could have this potential are as follows:~~

   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.

~~1.~~2.

- ~~A project promoting farmers markets – there are more than just specialty crops sold at farmers markets.~~
- ~~A project promoting "buy local" – there are more products to "buy local" than just specialty crops.~~
- ~~A project for developing distribution infrastructure – there are more than just specialty crops that are distributed as part of a local food system.~~

~~If YES, describe the methods or processes you will implement to verify all grant funds are expended on activities and costs that only enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops.~~

~~2.~~ **Does the project build on a previously funded SCBG project**?

If YES~~, list the title of the previously funded SCBG project(s).~~:

- Describe how the project differs from and builds on the previous project.
- Provide a summary (3 to 5 sentences) of the outcomes of the previous efforts~~Provide a brief summary of the accomplishments of the previous project that have led you to seek continued funding.~~
- ~~Describe the likelihood of the project becoming self-sustaining and not indefinitely dependent on grant funds.~~
- What was previously learned from implementing this project, including potential improvements?
- How are the lessons learned and improvements being incorporated into the project to make the ongoing project more effective and successful at meeting goals and outcomes?
- Describe the Likelihood of The Project becoming Self-Sustaining and not Indefinitely Dependent on Grant Funds.

3. 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?

~~3. **Has the project been submitted to or funded by another Federal or State grant program**?~~

If YES,

- ~~i~~Identify which Federal and/or State grant program~~, the status of the application (e.g. in process, awarded, etc.) and~~

- ~~describe how the project differs from and supplements the project that is being applied for. **MDA will not fund duplicative projects.**~~ Describe how the SCBGP project differs from or supplements the other grant program(s) efforts.

Potential Impact

This section should show how the project potentially impacts the specialty crop industry and/or 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. Where possible, use statistics to describe the target population of the project.

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

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

~~4. **What is the potential economic impact of the project?** Be specific and provide a number whenever possible refer back to the target population of the project. Examples of economic impact could be the estimated dollar amount of increased sales or decreased cost, the percent increase in yield, etc.~~

~~5.~~4. **Describe how you will share the results of the project with specialty crop growers and other interested specialty crop stakeholders.** Consider this a key aspect of the Proposal.

   Examples of stakeholder communications are:
   - Form an Advisory Committee of stakeholders, communicating each key project development and seeking continual feedback on progress;
   - Meet quarterly with stakeholder groups to inform of progress and share results;
   - Present findings at annual specialty crop stakeholder meeting;
   - Send quarterly progress/update emails to stakeholders; and
   - Publish news articles and distribute to statewide media.

~~6. **If the project is a multi-state project**:~~
   - ~~Which other States are participating?~~
   - ~~How will all States collaborate effectively?~~
   - ~~Has each State participating in the project submitted the project in its State Plan?~~
   - ~~Which State is taking the coordinating role~~
   - ~~What percent of the budget is covered by each State~~

Project Support

~~*Work Plan*~~

~~The following questions shall be answered in this section; use the provided table.~~

1. ~~**Project Activity**: What activities are necessary to accomplish the project's objectives? Be sure that activities match the budgeted items (i.e. if you budget and request funds for travel, include the travel in the work plan).~~

2. ~~**Who:** Who will do the work of each activity? Indicate the project participants who will do the work of each activity, including contractors. If you request grant funds for personnel and contractors, you must include them in the work plan.~~

3. ~~**Timeline:** When will each activity be started and complete? Include timelines for accomplishing each activity. Only the month and year of start and end dates is sufficient.~~

Stakeholders

Describe the specialty crop stakeholders who support this project and why (other than the applicant and organizations involved in the project).~~Using the provided table, describe the specialty crop stakeholders who support this project and how. Be sure to include the specialty crop stakeholder's organization, contact person (name), and location (city, state). MDA encourages Applicants to include specialty crop stakeholders as committed partners in project. Additionally, MDA recommends that Applicants contact the indicated specialty crop industry stakeholders prior to inclusion in the Grant Proposal. Letters of support are not allowed in the Grant Proposal.~~

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, through which this project could be funded. 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?** There are situations in which MDA must reduce budgets of projects in order to fund all or portions of the project. MDA encourages Applicants to provide guidance on which areas of the budget could be cut in order to fund as much of the project as feasible.

   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 aspects of the project could be cut and the corresponding change dollar amount reduction to the overall budget. Also, indicate whether the Outcomes ~~or work plan in your proposal would need to be adjusted~~.

Budget

(Appendix C)

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

Funding amount requested must be a minimum of $30,000; there is no maximum.

Matching contributions are not required.

Personnel

Persons employed by the grantee organization with SCBG funds should be listed here. Those employed elsewhere would be listed as subcontractors or consultants in the "Contractual" category. In order for secretarial and clerical salaries to be allowable, they must be listed as direct expenses in the budget narrative. Costs for general administrative or accounting or indirect costs are not allowable. The duties must be directly related to the project ~~plan, and the employee must be listed in the Work Plan~~.

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

- **Name/Title**: Provide the name and title of employee who will charge time to the award.
- ~~**Rate of Pay**: Provide the annual salary of the employee, hourly wage or stipend amount as is appropriate.~~
- **Level of Effort**: Provide the amount of FTE or percent of time the employee will dedicate to this project.
- **Funds Requested**: Provide the amount of federal funds you are requesting to support this budget line.
- **Match Funds Provided**: Provide the amount of match (cash or in-kind) you are contributing to support this budget line.

Personnel Justification

For each individual listed on the grant, describe the activities to be completed by name/title including approximately when activities will occur.

Costs associated with students staffers in a university setting on the project should be listed in the "other" section.

Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits are compensation in addition to direct wages or salaries, such medical insurance. Fringe benefits are allowable provided they are for personnel listed Personnel section. Fringe benefit expenses are not required even if personnel expenses will be charged to the grant.

Provide the following:

- **Name/ Title**: Provide the name and title of employee with a direct charge to the award.
- **Fringe Benefit Calculation**: Show how the funds requested are calculated based on the fringe benefit rate.
- **Funds Requested**: Provide the amount of federal funds you are requesting to support this budget line.
- **Match Funds Provided**: Provide the amount of match (cash or in-kind) you are contributing to support this budget line.

Travel

Travel expenses charged to the grant must be directly related to the project plan~~, and the travelers, destination, and purpose for each trip must be listed in the Work Plan~~.

Complete the following:

- **Trip Destination**
- ~~**Purpose of Travel:** State the reason for the travel.~~
- **Type of Expense:** airfare, car rental, hotel, meals, mileage, etc.
- **Number of Units:** e.g. 3 days, 700 miles, 2 nights.
- **Cost per Unit:**
- # of Travelers Claiming Expense
- **Funds Requested**: Provide the amount of federal funds you are requesting to support this budget line.
- **Match Funds Provided**: Provide the amount of match (cash or in-kind) you are contributing to support this budget line.

Travel Guidance

Travel costs may be charged on an actual cost basis, on a per diem or mileage basis in lieu of actual costs incurred, or on a combination of the two, provided the method used is applied to an entire trip and not to selected days of the trip, and results in charges consistent with those normally allowed the applicants written travel reimbursement policies.

Costs incurred for travel, including costs of lodging, other subsistence, and incidental expenses, must be considered reasonable and otherwise allowable only to the extent such costs do not exceed charges normally allowed by the applicant's written travel policy. In addition, the applicant must justify that:

1. Participation of the individual is necessary to the Federal award; and
2. The costs are reasonable and consistent with established travel policy.

In the absence of an acceptable, written policy regarding travel costs, the rates and amounts established under 5 U.S.C. 5701-11, ("Travel and Subsistence Expenses; Mileage Allowances"), or by the Administrator of General Services, or by the President (or his or her designee) pursuant to any provisions of such subchapter must apply to travel under Federal awards (48 CFR 31.205-46(a)).

Commercial air travel. (1) Airfare costs in excess of the basic least expensive unrestricted accommodations class offered by commercial airlines are unallowable except when such accommodations would:

1. Require circuitous routing;
2. Require travel during unreasonable hours;
3. Excessively prolong travel;
4. Result in additional costs that would offset the transportation savings; or
5. Offer accommodations not reasonably adequate for the traveler's medical needs. The non-Federal entity must justify and document these conditions on a case-by-case basis in order for the use of first-class or business-class airfare to be allowable in such cases.

Air travel by other than commercial carrier. Costs of travel by non-Federal entity-owned, -leased, or -chartered aircraft include the cost of lease, charter, operation (including personnel costs), maintenance, depreciation, insurance, and other related costs. The portion of such costs that exceeds the cost of airfare as provided for in paragraph (d) of this section, is unallowable.

Travel Justification

For each trip listed, describe the purpose of this trip and how it will achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project. Be sure to include approximately when the trip will occur.

Equipment

This category includes tangible, nonexpendable, property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds $5,000 per unit. All tangible property that does not qualify as "Equipment" must be included under Supplies. ~~The equipment must be directly related to the project plan and must be listed in the Work Plan.~~

- ~~**Equipment**:~~**Item Description** ~~Provide the official name of the equipment, including brand, to be purchased.~~
- ~~**Justification of Equipment**: Describe the purpose, intended use, for which you plan to purchase the equipment, tied directly to an objective, goal, activity, or outcome listed in the Proposal.~~
- **Purchase or Rental**
- **Acquire When?**
- **Funds Requested**: Provide the amount of federal funds you are requesting to support this budget line.
- **Match Funds Provided**: Provide the amount of match (cash or in-kind) you are contributing to support this budget line.

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 listed above, describe how this equipment will be used to achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project. Add more equipment as needed.

Supplies

This category should include all tangible property that does not qualify as Equipment, this may include office supplies, educational materials or lab supplies. Items such as long distance charges, postage, fax and express mail should be listed under the Other category. ~~Supplies must be directly related to the project plan and listed in the Work Plan, when feasible.~~

Complete the following:

- **Item Description**: What it is you will purchase with grant funds.
- ~~**Justification for Supplies:** What is the purpose of the supplies?~~
- **Per Unit Cost**
- **Number of Units/Pieces Purchased**

- **Acquire When**
- **Funds Requested**: Provide the amount of federal funds you are requesting to support this budget line.
- **Match Funds Provided**: Provide the amount of match (cash or in-kind) you are contributing to support this budget line.

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).

Contractual

Contractual/consultant costs are the expenses associated with purchasing goods and/or procuring services in the form of a procurement relationship. If there is more than one contractor or consultant, each must be listed separately. ~~The contractor/consultant must be necessary to the project plan and listed in the Work Plan.~~

If the contractor's hourly rates of pay exceed the salary of a GS-14 step 10 Federal employee in your area, provide a justification for the expenses. This limit does not include fringe benefits, travel, or other expenses. Federal employee wage table can be viewed at http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/.

Complete the following:

- **Contractor Name:** Indicate the name of the selected contractor, or if the contractor is not selected yet, indicate "not yet selected."
- **Hourly Rate/Flat Rate**~~**Contracted Activity:** What it is the contractor will do, tie activities directly to an objective, goal, activity, or outcome. Contracted activities must be included in the Work Plan.~~
- **Funds Requested**: Provide the amount of federal funds you are requesting to support this budget line.
- **Match Funds Provided**: Provide the amount of match (cash or in-kind) you are contributing to support this budget line.

~~**If the contractors/consultants have already been selected**, verify that you followed procurement procedures which reflect applicable State and local laws and regulations and conform to the Federal laws and standards identified in 2 CFR Part 200~~

~~**If the contractors/consultants have not already been selected**, verify that you will follow all applicable State and local laws and regulations and conform to the Federal law and standards identified in 2 CFR Part 200.~~

Contractual Justification

Describe the project activities each contractor or consultant will accomplish to meet the objectives and outcomes of the project. Include timelines for each activity. If contractor employee and 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 http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-

wages/2016/general-schedule/), provide a justification for the expenses. This limit does not include fringe benefits, travel, indirect costs, or other expenses.

Other

List all other direct costs not covered in any of the previous budget categories. ~~The other expenses must be directly related to the activities listed in the Work Plan.~~ Examples include

- **Conference/Meeting** – Costs of holding a conference or meeting are included in this category. Details of costs for each conference or meeting should be broken out and provided in the budget.
- **Communications** – Mailings, postage, express mail, faxes, and telephone long distance charges. Provide the estimated cost for this category.
- **Speaker/Trainer Fees** – Provide the amount of the speaker's fees and a description of the services they are providing.
- **Publication Costs** – Provide the estimated cost of printing the brochures and other program materials or scientific or technical journals as well as an estimate of the number of pieces to be printed/published.
- **Data Collection** – Provide the estimated cost of collecting performance data to measure the project outcome measures.
- Costs associated with employing **student workers** in a university setting.

To complete this section:

- **Item Description:** Describe what is being purchased.
- ~~**Justification of Expense**~~
- **Per Unit Cost**
- **Number of units Provided**
- **Acquire When?**
- **Funds Requested**: Provide the amount of federal funds you are requesting to support this budget line.
- **Match Funds Provided**: Provide the amount of match (cash or in-kind) you are contributing to support this budget line.

Other Justification

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

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.
- **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.

Next Steps

After you submit the Grant Proposal Packet (see "Submission"), the SCBG Program Manager will notify you of receipt. MDA encourages all Applicants to officially submit Proposals at least one week prior to the due date in order to ensure on-time receipt. If you do not receive a notification of receipt within 24 hours of intended delivery, contact SCBG Program Manager.

MDA may ask an Applicant for more information on any of the Grant Proposal Packet Requirements throughout this process.

Confidential Information

After grant awards have been made, all Grant Proposal packets and the associated evaluations will be made available to the public. PRIOR TO SUBMITTING 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 suspended or debarred from receiving funds?
- 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 successfully completed 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 the next step, Evaluation. Grant Proposals that do not pass the screening process 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 above criteria, even if there are enough remaining grant funds to do so.

SCBG Program Manager will notify all Applicants of the results of the screening process within 60 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 Team

MDA will send applications that pass screening to the Evaluation Workgroup. MDA selects the Evaluation Workgroup based on geographic area and their qualifications. 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 for funding. MDA Legal staff will review all disclosed conflicts of interest to determine whether a conflict of interest exists under state law. If a conflict exists, the workgroup member will be recused from participating in the decision process on the conflicting application. All workgroup members will certify that they are free from any conflict of interest on the applications they are allowed to consider.

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~~40	• How well does the applicant define the need for and purpose of the project? • Are the project objectives clear and appropriate? • Is the project important and timely?
Potential Impact	30	• Does the applicant identify a specific group of specialty crop industry beneficiaries? • Does the applicant demonstrate that the project will be effective at creating positive impact for the beneficiaries? • 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?
~~Work Plan~~	~~10~~	~~• Is the work plan complete?~~ ~~• Is the work plan feasible?~~ ~~• Is the timeline reasonable?~~ • ~~Do the tasks relate to the project objectives and expected measurable outcomes?~~
Project Support	10	• Is industry support for the project demonstrated? • Are stakeholders actively involved in the project? • ~~Do stakeholders have an active role in any activities outlined in the project work plan?~~
Budget	10	• Is the amount requested reasonable? • Are line items reasonable and appropriate? • Does the budget narrative adequately explain the line items?

Scoring Matrix

Member 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

The consensus scores of the grant review workgroup will be used in ranking applications. Rankings will be presented to the Director of MDA who will make the final determination regarding which applications will be recommended to USDA-AMS for funding.

The third step in the funding process is inclusion review and recommendation of the MDA director.

Director's Recommendation

The Director of MDA will utilize the Evaluation Team's rankings of applications, as well as the priorities identified in this packet to determine which projects will be recommendation to USDA-AMS for funding. All projects in the State Recommendation must comply with eligibility requirements and, in total, not exceed Montana's SCBG allocation. MDA reserves the right to fund projects in part, add and delete tasks, and ask for clarification on the ~~work plan,~~ timeline, and budget. No agreement will be entered until MDA is satisfied with all the specifications of the project.

Given the Directors decision, the SCBG Program Manager will submit a packet containing recommended proposals to USDA-AMS for their final approval. The decision of the Director does not guarantee funding. Funding is dependent on the availability of federal funds and the final approval from the USDA.

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

Expected Measurable Outcomes

(Appendix D)

Applicants whose proposals are selected by the director will be required to 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.

The fourth step in the funding process is approval from USDA-AMS.

USDA-AMS Approval

Upon receipt, USDA-AMS will review the State Recommendation in order to ensure that it meets the statutory purpose of the program, all application criteria are fulfilled in accordance with regulations and that costs are allowable. USDA-AMS may require additional information from Applicants at this time; failure to provide requested information in a timely manner may result in lose of funding.

Once all administrative and programmatic issues have been resolved, USDA-AMS will formally notify MDA, and the SCBG Program Manager will soon after notify Applicants of the results. MDA anticipates that grant awards and notifications will be made in late 2016.

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

Grant Agreement

At this time, Subrecipient must decide whether or not to accept the award, including modifications to the Proposal's activities, outcomes, budget, etc.:

1. **If Subrecipient cannot accept the award**, including the legal obligation to perform in accordance with award terms and conditions, the recipient should notify the SCBG Program Manager immediately upon receipt of the Grant Agreement.
2. **If Subrecipient chooses to accept the award**, signing the grant agreement constitutes acceptance of an award, including any modifications to the Proposal's activities, outcomes, budget, etc., and the agreement's associated terms and conditions, as listed in the grant agreement and Grant Management Manual located on the Montana Specialty Crop Webpage.

Requests for Reconsideration

If a grant application is denied, the grant applicant may request reconsideration based on substantive issues of fact concerning bias, discrimination, conflicts of interest, and/or non-compliance with procedures described in the Funding Notice document

The applicant must request reconsideration in writing to the Department of Agriculture, SCGB Manager, within 14 days of notification of the denial.

The request must:

> (1) Describe the substantive fact(s) concerning bias, discrimination, conflict of interest, or noncompliance that cause the applicant to conclude the proposal should have been approved.
>
> (2) Outline the specific area(s) in the proposal the applicant believes significantly addresses the Notice requirements.
>
> (3) Identify specific information in the proposal the applicant believes were misapprehended by the MDA.

MDA Legal Counsel and/or other designated staff will review the request for reconsideration within seven (7) days of its receipt to ensure it is in compliance with this policy and merits further review by MDA.

If MDA Legal Counsel and/or other designee determine the request for reconsideration substantiates material issues concerning bias, discrimination, conflict of interest, or non-compliance with procedures set forth in the Notice, the Agriculture Development and Marketing Bureau Chief will review the proposal to determine if the claims laid out in the appeal letter are of substantial consequence to warrant reconsideration of funding decisions.

The Department will notify the applicant of the result of the reconsideration within 14 days of its receipt of the request for reconsideration.

Appendix A Grantee Self-Assessment

Grantee Self-Assessment of Internal Controls and Risks

This form can be accessed in an open format at the following link:
http://external.agr.mt.gov/_downloadGallery/SCBG/2016_Appendix_A_-_Grantee_Self-Assessment_of_Internal_Controls_and_Risks.docx

The Montana Department of Agriculture will use this Self-Assessment as part of a Risk Assessment for each Grantee. Your answers will determine the extent to which special conditions are applied to your award, such as reporting frequency, site visits, source documentation, etc.

Company/Organization Name	
Grant Project Contact	
Project Title	
Date Prepared	

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 of mitigating controls or a note of planned changes****.*

Control Environment

Staff Qualifications

3 or more	1-3	Less than 1	Internal Control
			For the Grant Project Contact listed in your proposal, how many years of experience in the position does he/she have?
			For the Grant Project Contact listed in your proposal, how many Federal grants has he/she managed or participated in as key personnel?
Comments:			

Organizational Structure

Yes	N/A	No	Internal Control
			Do organizational policies exist delegating grant management responsibility among staff?
			Is program information issued by the Montana Department of Agriculture's Specialty Crop Block Grant program distributed to appropriate staff?
Comments:			

Human Resources

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?
			Do all supervisors and managers have at least a working knowledge of federal grant management practices?
Comments:			

Accounting

Yes	N/A	No	Internal Control
			Are accounting policies in place to ensure that all organization expenses are accompanied source documentation?
			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 the Federal and State record retention policy?
			Are periodic (monthly, quarterly) reports of actual to budgeted spending prepared and reviewed by accounting and grant staff?
			Does your accounting system track the receipt and disbursal of funds by each grant or funding source?
Comments:			

Allowable Activities & Costs

Yes	N/A	No	Internal Control
			Before expenditures are made, does someone check that funds used for that activity are allowable?
			Are expenditure/reimbursement reports reviewed to ensure adherence to funding limits?
			Have personnel responsible for coding expenditures been trained on federal grant management to determine expenditures which are allowable and allocable to the Federal programs?
			Are periodic (monthly, quarterly) reports on the status of actual to planned performance prepared and reviewed by accounting and grant staff?
			Are the following duties generally performed by different people: preparing, reviewing and approving requests for reimbursement?
			Are written procurement policies maintained and used by your organization?
			Is a written travel policy maintained by your organization?
Comments:			

Equipment Management

Answers to this questions are 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

Answers to this questions are 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 counted entered into your organizations accounting system?
			Are cash receipt policies and procedures clearly documented and communicated to personnel responsible for program income?
			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 annual 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://external.agr.mt.gov/_downloadGallery/SCBG/2016_Appendix_B_-_SCBG_Proposal_Template.docx~~

http://agr.mt.gov/_downloadGallery/SCBG/2016_Appendix_B_-_REVISED_SCBG_Proposal_Template.docx

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 #			**DUNS # applied for?**		**Yes**		**No**	
Grant Project Contact								
Mailing Address								
Physical Address								
Phone			**Cell**					
Email								
Grant Management Contact								
Phone			**Email**					
Project Information								
Project Title (limited to **fifteen** words)								
Project Begin Date			**Project End Date**					
Funding Amount Requested								
Specific Specialty Crop benefiting from grant								
Area of Focus (select all that apply)		*Agricultural education and outreach*		*Food safety enhancement*				
		Sustainable production practices		*Good ag/handling/mfg practices*				
		Crop research/conservation		*Nutrition education*				
		Marketing/trade enhancement		*Plant pest and disease control*				
		Other (list)						
Will project benefit beginning farmer/ranchers?*		**Yes**		**No**	**Will project benefit socially disadvantaged farmer/ranchers?****		**Yes**		**No**
Is this a multi-state project?		**Yes**		**No**	**List partnering state(s)**			

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

****Socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers -** means a farmer or rancher 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: ~~the need for the project, a brief description of the goals and outcomes, and your plan for evaluating and measuring the success of the project or program.~~

1. *The name of the applicant organization that if awarded a grant will establish an agreement or contractual relationship with the State department of agriculture to lead and execute the project,*
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 this goal.*

Project Purpose

1. **What is the specific issue, problem or need to be addressed by the project**? What is it that you are trying to solve or fix? 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. **Why is the project important and timely**? Describe how the identified problem or need is affecting Montana and why the timing of the proposed project is critical.~~

What are the objectives of the project? Provide general objectives, what you want to accomplish with this project, ~~. In addition to providing a narrative of objectives, objectives must be organized~~ in the table provided below.

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

Citations (Optional)

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

Eligibility

~~1. **Does the project have the potential to enhance the competitiveness of non-specialty crops?**~~

~~2.~~1. ~~If YES, describe the methods or processes you will implement to verify all grant funds are expended on activities and costs that only enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops.~~ **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	

~~3.~~ **Does the project build on a previously funded SCBG project?**

~~4.~~2. If YES:~~, list the title of the previously funded SCBG project(s).~~

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

- ~~Provide a brief summary of the accomplishments of the previous project that have led you to seek continued funding.~~
- Provide a summary (3 to 5 sentences) of the outcomes of the previous efforts~~Describe the likelihood of the project becoming self-sustaining and not indefinitely dependent on grant funds~~.

- **What was previously learned from implementing this project, including potential improvements?**

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

- Describe the Likelihood of The Project becoming Self-Sustaining and not Indefinitely Dependent on Grant Funds.

3. **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	

~~5.~~4. **Has the project been submitted to or funded by another Federal or State grant program?**

If YES,

identify which Federal and/or State grant program~~, the status of the application (e.g. in process, awarded, etc.)~~ ~~and~~

~~describe how the project differs from and supplements the project that is being applied for. **MDA will not fund duplicative projects**.~~ Describe how the SCBGP project differs from or supplements the other grant program(s) efforts.

Potential Impact

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

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

3. **How will the beneficiaries be impacted by the project?** Be specific. Examples of impact could be increased sales, increased awareness, increased yield, etc.

~~4. **What is the potential economic impact of the project?** Be specific and provide a number whenever possible refer back to the target population of the project. Examples of economic impact could be the estimated dollar amount of increased sales or decreased cost, the percent increase in yield, etc.~~

5.4. **Describe how you will share the results of the project with specialty crop growers and other interested specialty crop stakeholders.** Consider this a key aspect of the Proposal.

6. **If the project is a multi-state project**:
   - Which other States are participating?
   - How will all States collaborate effectively?
   - Has each State participating in the project submitted the project in its State Plan?
   - Which State is taking the coordinating role
   - What percent of the budget is covered by each State

Project Support

Work Plan

Project Activity	Who	Timeline
Example: Develop lettuce marketing materials	*Jane Smith, Graphic Designer, Montana Specialty Crop Association*	*October 1 – November 1, 2015*
		Tab through to add additional lines

Stakeholders

Describe the specialty crop stakeholders who support this project and why (other than the applicant and organizations involved in the project).Describe the specialty crop stakeholders who support this project and how. Be sure to include the specialty crop stakeholder's organization, contact person (name), and location (city, state). MDA encourages Applicants to include specialty crop stakeholders as committed partners in project. Additionally, MDA recommends that Applicants contact the indicated specialty crop industry stakeholders prior to inclusion in the Grant Proposal. Letters of support are not allowed in the Grant Proposal.

~~Specialty Crop Stakeholder~~	~~Reason for Support~~
~~*Example: Bill Jones, owner, Mountain Lettuce Company*~~	~~*Is interested in seeing more done to promote Montana specialty crops. Bill will donate lettuce for the chef and public sampling events.*~~
	~~Tab through here to add additional lines~~

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, through which this project could be funded. No further explanation is necessary.

3. 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 or work plan in your proposal would need to be adjusted.

Explain:	

Appendix C Budget

This form can be accessed in an open format at the following link:
~~**http://external.agr.mt.gov/_downloadGallery/SCBG/2016_Appendix_C_-_SCBG_budget_development_worksheet.xlsx**~~

http://agr.mt.gov/_downloadGallery/SCBG/2016_Appendix_C_-_SCBG_budget_development_worksheet_-_REVISED.xlsx

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Budget | Federal Fiscal Year 2016 Funding Cycle

Please round totals to the next whole dollar.

Funding amount requested must be a minimum of $30,000; there is no maximum.

Personnel

Persons employed by the grantee organization with SCBG funds should be listed here. Those employed elsewhere would be listed as subcontractors or consultants in the "Contractual" category. In order for secretarial and clerical salaries to be allowable, they must be listed as direct expenses in the budget narrative. Costs for general administrative or accounting or indirect costs are not allowable. ~~The duties must be directly related to the project plan, and the employee must be listed in the Work Plan.~~ **Costs associated with students in a university setting on the project should be listed in the "other" section.**

Name/Title:	~~Rate of Pay:~~ Level of Effort (# of hours OR % FTE)	Funds Requested	Match Funds Provided

Total Personnel Funds Requested	$ -
Total Personnel Match Provided	$ -

Personnel Justification

For each individual listed above, describe the activities to be completed by name/title including approximately when activities will occur. Add more personnel as needed.

Personnel 1:	
Personnel 2:	
Personnel 3:	

Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits are compensation in addition to direct wages or salaries, such medical insurance. Fringe benefits are allowable provided they are for personnel listed Personnel section. Fringe benefit expenses are not required even if personnel expenses will be charged to the grant.

Name/Title:	Fringe Benefit Rate Calculation:	Funds Requested	Match Funds Provided

Total Fringe Funds Requested	$ -
Total Fringe Match Provided	$ -

Travel

Travel expenses charged to the grant must be directly related to the project plan~~, and the travelers, destination, and purpose for each trip must be listed in the Work Plan~~.

Trip Destination:	~~Purpose of Travel:~~ Type of Expense: (airfare, car rental, hotel, meals, mileage, etc.)	Unit of Measure: (days, nights, miles)	~~Type of Expense:~~ # of Units:	~~Number of Units:~~ Cost Per Unit:	~~Cost per Unit:~~ # of Travelers Claiming expense	Funds Requested	Match Funds Provided

Total Travel Funds Requested	$ -
Total Travel Match Provided	$ -

Travel Justification

For each trip listed above, describe the purpose of this trip and how it will achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project. Be sure to include approximately when the trip will occur. Add more trips as needed.

Trip 1 (Approximate Date of Travel MM/YYYY):	
Trip 2 (Approximate Date of Travel MM/YYYY):	
Trip 3 (Approximate Date of Travel MM/YYYY):	

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

This category includes tangible, nonexpendable, property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds $5,000 per unit. All tangible property that does not qualify as "Equipment" must be included under Supplies. ~~The equipment must be directly related to the project plan and must be listed in the Work Plan.~~

~~Equipment:~~ Item Description:	Purchase or Rental?	Acquire When?	Funds Requested	Match Funds Provided

Total Equipment Funds Requested	$ -
Total Equipment Match Provided	$ -

Equipment Justification

For each Equipment item listed above, describe how this equipment will be used to achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project. Add more equipment as needed.

Equipment 1:	
Equipment 2:	
Equipment 3:	

Supplies

This category should include all tangible property that does not qualify as Equipment, this may include office supplies, educational materials or lab supplies. Items such as long distance charges, postage, fax and express mail should be listed under the Other category. ~~Supplies must be directly related to the project plan and listed in the Work Plan, when feasible.~~

Item Description:	~~Justification for Supplies:~~ Per Unit Cost	~~Per unit cost~~ # of Units	~~Number of units~~ Acquire When?	Funds Requested	Match Funds Provided

Total Supplies Funds Requested	$ -
Total Supplies Match Provided	$ -

Supplies Justification

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

Contractual

Contractual/consultant costs are the expenses associated with purchasing goods and/or procuring services in the form of a procurement relationship. If there is more than one contractor or consultant, each must be listed separately. ~~The contractor/consultant must be necessary to the project plan and listed in the Work Plan.~~

If the contractor's hourly rates of pay exceed the salary of a GS-14 step 10 Federal employee in your area, provide a justification for the expenses. This limit does not include fringe benefits, travel, or other expenses. Federal employee wage table can be viewed at http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/.

Contractor:	~~Contracted Activity:~~Hourly Rate/Flat Rate:	Funds Requested	Match Funds Provided

Contractual Justification

Describe the project activities each contractor or consultant will accomplish to meet the objectives and outcomes of the project. Include timelines for each activity. If contractor employee and 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 http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/2016/general-schedule/), 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:	

-	~~**If the contractors/consultants have already been selected**, type yes in the cell to the left to verify that you followed procurement procedures which reflect applicable State and local laws and regulations and conform to the Federal laws and standards identified in 2 CFR Part 200~~
-	~~**If the contractor/consultant has not already been selected**, type yes in the cell to the left to verify that you will follow all applicable State and local laws and regulations and conform to the Federal law and standards identified in 2 CFR Part 200.~~

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
Total Contractual Match Provided	$0

Other

Direct costs are all other direct costs not covered in any of the previous budget categories. ~~The other expenses must be directly related to the project plan must be listed in the Work Plan, when feasible.~~

Item description:	~~Justification of the Expense:~~ Per-Unit Cost:	~~Per-Unit Cost:~~ Number of Units Provided:	~~Number of units Provided:~~ Acquire When:	Funds Requested	Match Funds Provided

Other Justification

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

Total Other Funds Requested	$ -
Total Other Match Provided	$ -

Total Funds Requested	$ -
Total Match Provided	$ -
Match Percent	

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

Please note that the below information is not in its final version. 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 crop 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 (not percentage) increase in sales of one or more specialty crops in one or more States or foreign markets as result of marketing and/or promotion activities. For example, an expected outcome of growth in sales from 5% to 10% is not acceptable, but an increase in sales of $1 million to $2 million is acceptable. This requirement means that an established baseline of sales in dollars must 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 $_____ as result of marketing and/or promotion activities

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

Indicators:

1. Of the _____total number of children and youth reached,
   - The number that gained knowledge about eating more specialty crops
   - The number that reported an intention to eat more specialty crops
   - The number that reported eating more specialty crops
2. Of the ____total number of individuals (employees, seniors, caregivers, etc.) reached,
   - The number that gained knowledge about eating more specialty crops
   - The number that reported an intention to eat more specialty crops
   - 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 products using specialty crops introduced to consumers____

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

Indicators:

1. Of the _____total number of families with children reached,
   - The number that gained knowledge of how to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops
   - The number that reported an intention to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops
   - The number that reported supplementing their diets with specialty crops that they produced/preserved/obtained/prepared
2. Of the ____total number of individuals (employees, specialty crop entrepreneurs such as kitchen incubators/shared-use kitchens, etc.) reached,
   - The number that gained knowledge of how to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops
   - The number that reported an intention to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops
   - 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 their offering of specialty crops
   - _____farmers markets
   - _____produce at corner stores
   - _____school food programs and other food options (vending machines, school events, etc.)
   - _____grocery stores
   - _____wholesale markets
   - _____food hub that processes, aggregates, distributes, or stores specialty crops
   - _____other systems/access points, not noted
   - _____total (if not reported above)

4. Number of new delivery systems/access points offering specialty crops
   - _____farmers markets
   - _____produce at corner stores
   - _____school food programs and other food options (vending machines, school events, etc.)
   - _____grocery stores
   - _____wholesale markets

- _____ food hub that processes, aggregates, distributes, or stores specialty crops
- _____other systems/access points, not noted
- _____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.
   - Number of growers/producers indicating adoption of recommended practices _____
   - Number of growers/producers reporting reduction in pesticides, fertilizer, water used/acre _____
   - Number of producers reporting increased dollar returns per acre or reduced costs per acre _____
   - Number acres in conservation tillage or other best management practice _____
3. Number of habitat acres established and maintained for the primary benefit of pollinators_____

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

Indicators:

1. Number of new or improved innovations (models (biological, economic, business, management, etc.), technologies, networks, products, processes, etc.) developed for specialty crop entities along the food supply chain: 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 the ecology of threats to food safety from microbial and chemical sources

Indicators:

1. Number of projects focused on increased understanding of the ecology of fecal indicators and pathogens _____
2. Number of projects focused on increased safety of all inputs into the specialty crop chain _____
3. Number of projects focused on increased understanding of the roles of humans, plants and animals as vectors _____
4. Number of projects focused on 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 _____
5. Increased revenue/increased savings/one-time capital purchases (in dollars) _____
6. Number of new beginning farmers 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.