



MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF **AGRICULTURE**

2025 SCBG Request for Proposal Manual

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Federal Fiscal Year 2025 Funding Cycle

Grant Proposal Due Date:

February 28, 2025, 5:00 p.m. MST

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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 (FFY) 2025 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – Request for Proposal Manual.

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Funding Opportunity Description

Mission Statement

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

Legislative Authority

The Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBG) is authorized under section 101 of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 ([7 U.S.C. 1621 note](#)) and amended under [section 10010 of the Agricultural Act of 2014, Public Law 113-79](#) (the Farm Bill). SCBG is currently implemented under [7 CFR part 1291](#) (published March 27, 2009; 74 FR 13313). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) administers the SCBG, sub-awarding 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 enhancing the competitiveness of Montana specialty crops.

Available Funds

MDA anticipates funding available of approximately \$3,000,000. MDA plans to award multiple grants from these funds.

Critical Dates

Date	Time*	Event	Venue
January 1, 2025	5:00 PM	Post Notice of Funding	MDA Website
Jan 22, 2025	1:00 PM	Technical Assistance #1	Zoom Call**
Feb 21, 2025	10:00 AM	Technical Assistance #2	Zoom Call**
Feb 28, 2025	5:00 PM	Applications Due to MDA	WebGrants
TBD-Summer, 2025		Award Announcement	MT Dept. of Ag

*All times in Mountain Standard Time

**Call information will be posted on the [MDA website](#)

General Compliance

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

Eligibility

Eligible & Ineligible Specialty Crops

A comprehensive definition of specialty crops can be found on the [USDA website](#).

Eligible specialty crops must be intensively cultivated and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification to be eligible.

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.

Enhance Specialty Crops

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

Multiple Beneficiaries

MDA will not award grant funds for projects that solely benefit a 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.

Limit on Active Projects, Past Performance Considered

The SCBG program reserves the right to limit the number of active projects for any grant recipient and project lead. Limiting the number of projects could be for practical reasons, such as the PI/project lead already determined to be at 1.0 FTE on current SCBG projects awarded. An applicant may also be removed from competition in the screening stage if they previously received funding from MDA and failed to adequately deliver on the conditions of that funding. Failure to perform may include, but is not limited to:

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

Minimum & Maximum Amount

Funding amount requested must be a minimum of \$25,000; there is no maximum funding on a project.

UEI Number

In order to receive an award all applying entities (as defined in [2 CFR Part 25, subpart C](#)) must provide a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number. A UEI can be obtained for free through SAM.gov at <https://sam.gov/content/home>.

Debarment & Suspension

Organizations or individuals that are suspended, debarred, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from eligibility for covered transactions by any Federal or [State](#) 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. The requirements of [Subpart C of 2 CFR part 180](#) provide Subrecipient’s responsibilities when entering into a lower-tier transaction.

Delinquency on Federal Debt

Any organization or individual that is indebted to the United States and has a judgment lien filed against it for a debt to the United States, is ineligible to receive a federal grant. Applicants are required to inform MDA if they are delinquent on any Federal debt. If an applicant discloses a delinquency, MDA may not award a 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 a participant in an application for a SCBG grant until the judgment is paid in full or is otherwise satisfied. No funds may be re-budgeted 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.

Eligible Projects

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

- Enhancing food safety;
- Improving the capacity of all entities in the specialty crop distribution chain to comply with the requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act (21 U.S.C. Chapter 27), for example, developing “Good Agricultural Practices,” “Good Handling Practices,” “Good Manufacturing Practices,” and in cost-share arrangements for funding audits of such systems (including USDA GroupGAP) for small farmers, packers and processors;
- Investing in specialty crop research, including research to focus on conservation and environmental outcomes;
- Developing new and improved seed varieties and specialty crops;
- Pest and disease control;
- Increasing child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops;
- Improving efficiency and reducing costs of distribution systems; and
- Sustainability.

Projects that support the increased consumption of fruits and vegetables in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by providing incentives at the point of purchase and/or include technologies for benefit redemption systems should consider submitting those projects to the [Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Grant Program \(FINI\)](#).

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

Projects that support biobased products and bioenergy and energy programs, including biofuels and other alternative uses for agricultural and forestry commodities (development of biobased products) should see the USDA energy website at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/energy-programs> for information on how to submit those projects for consideration to the energy programs supported by USDA. Please see the link for the [Rural Energy for America \(REAP\)](#) grant program.

Examples of Acceptable Projects

- A non-profit organization requests funds to conduct an advertising campaign that will benefit its 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.

Examples of Unacceptable Projects

- A company requests grant funds to purchase starter plants or equipment used to plant, cultivate, and grow a specialty crop to make a profit, or to expand production of a single business or organization.

- A single specialty crop organization requests grant funds to market its organization so that it can increase its membership.

Priorities

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

Providing Farmer Education on Specialty Crop(s)

- Farm to institution practices
- Value-added production
- Farm and food safety
- Organic production
- Soil health and conservation
- Industry promotion and marketing development
- Tribal sharing of traditional ecological knowledge of indigenous specialty crops

Planning and Supporting Infrastructures that create or support Specialty Crop(s)

- Cost-sharing and cooperative models for storage
- Distribution system efficiency, cost-savings and resiliency
- Regional and state processing infrastructure planning
- Farm to Institute

Supporting Research in the Areas of Specialty Crop(s)

- Drought tolerant, Cold tolerant, and disease resistant varieties
- Low external-input growing methods
- Genetic resources for cultivar development
- Low-cost technology development for the producer
- Use of beneficial organisms
- Specialty crop training in production methods

Building Consumer and Buyer Relationships

- Regional and statewide education and marketing efforts around specialty crop products
- Marketing opportunities to connect producers and buyers

Strengthening Producer Networks and Associations

- Producer networking events
- Capacity building
- Use of available forums for producer connections
- Encourage consumer education

Representing a Geographic Diversity of Projects across the State, with Rural and Tribal Consideration

Multiple Grant Proposals

An entity may submit more than one grant proposal only if the proposals are for distinctly different projects, and the Primary Investigator's work does not exceed 1.0 FTE.

Multi-State Partnerships

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

Applicants should specifically address how the funds requested benefit Montana.

How to Apply

Applications for this grant should be completed on the provided forms in the appendices and submitted via the WebGrants website. Forms are also posted on the [Montana specialty crop webpage](#) in an open format.

Applications will only be accepted on the forms provided and submitted through [WebGrants](#).

Applications may not be submitted on paper or via email.

Important Dates

Final Grant Proposal Due Date

Completed grant proposal packets must be uploaded and submitted via WebGrants no later than **5:00 p.m. Friday, February 28, 2025**. **Late applications cannot be submitted in WebGrants after the end date and time.**

Project Operating Dates

Proposed projects should start no earlier than September 30, 2025 and end no later than September 29, 2028. No-cost extensions beyond September 29, 2028, are not allowable per USDA regulations.

Submission

Requirements for submitting the grant are as follows:

Grant Proposal Packet Requirements

Applicants must adhere to the instructions in this RFP to be eligible for grant funds. Grant Proposals must be submitted in their entirety. Applications should not contain any materials not requested in this packet.

Method

Applications must be uploaded and submitted via WebGrants. If technical difficulties make applying impossible, the applicant must contact the SCBG Program Manager **prior to the application due date**.

Next Steps

After submitting the Grant Proposal Packet, the WebGrants system will notify you of receipt. MDA encourages all Applicants to submit proposals at least one week prior to the due date to ensure on-time

receipt. If you do not receive a notification of receipt within 24 hours of the due date, contact the SCBG Program Manager.

Confidential Information

After grant awards have been made, all Grant Proposal packets and the associated evaluations will be available to the public. **PRIOR TO SUBMITTING a proposal to the Department, you must send a written description of the information you believe is subject to confidentiality (including trade secrets, as defined by Mont. Code Ann. 30-14-402).** 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 confidentiality 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, the Department of Agriculture Director, and Department legal counsel. Applicants shall pay all legal costs associated with defending a claim for confidentiality should another person or entity submit a State of Montana, Article 2 “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?
- Are the applicant and listed contractors eligible to receive federal funds (not suspended or debarred)?
- Is the application in compliance with applicable federal and state regulations and in alignment with this notice?
- If a current SCBG grantee, is the Grant Project Contact (or PI, etc.) already working at 1.0 FTE?
- If a current SCBG grantee, are all current project invoicing and reporting periods current?
- If a previous grantee, has the organization successfully completed past projects?
- Does the proposed project enhance the competitiveness of 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?

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

Screening Results

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

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

The second step in the funding decision process is Evaluation.

Evaluation

Reviewers

MDA will send applications that pass screening to reviewers. MDA selects the reviewers based on expertise and geographic distribution. To ensure high quality and fair reviews, the reviewers will consist of technical experts from various fields.

Conflict of Interest

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

Evaluation Criteria

Reviewers 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the applicant define the need for and purpose of the project?• Is the project important and timely?• Are the project objectives clear and appropriate?• Do the objectives align adequately with the outcome(s) and indicator(s)?
Potential Impact	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the proposed project continue the efforts of a previously funded project?• If so, what is the plan for the project to eventually become self-sustaining?• Does the applicant define a specific group of specialty crop industry beneficiaries?• Does the applicant provide a reasonable estimate of the number of beneficiaries that will be impacted?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the applicant describe how beneficiaries will be impacted by the project? Do they show that the project will improve upon the current conditions that are facing producers? Does the applicant demonstrate that the project will have a significant economic impact for the specialty crop industry?
Outreach	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the applicant present a plan to share information from this project with specialty crop growers and stakeholders?
Project Support	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the applicant demonstrate that they have engaged critical stakeholders that will help to ensure the success and impact of the project?
Budget	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the amount requested reasonable? Are line items reasonable and appropriate? Does the budget narrative adequately explain the line items?

Scoring Matrix

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

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

Applications will be ranked based on the consensus (not average) scores of the grant review workgroup. Rankings will be presented to the MDA Director who will make the final determination regarding which applications will be recommended to USDA-AMS for funding.

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

Director’s Recommendation

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

SCBG Program Manager will notify all Applicants of the results of the Evaluation process and inclusion in the Director’s decision within 120 days of the application due date.

USDA-AMS Approval

Applications selected by the Director for submission will be sent to USDA-AMS for final review. USDA-AMS will conduct a review to ensure proposals meet the statutory purpose of the program, are in

accordance with regulations and costs are allowable. USDA-AMS may require additional information from Applicants at this time; failure to provide the requested information in a timely manner may result in loss of funding.

Once all administrative and programmatic issues have been resolved, USDA-AMS will notify MDA and the SCBG Program Manager will notify Applicants of the results. MDA anticipates that grant awards and notifications will be made Summer, 2025.

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

Grant Agreement

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

Subaward opportunities published by the Montana Department of Agriculture must include acknowledgment that funding is from USDA AMS and use the USDA logo.

Requests for Reconsideration

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

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

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

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

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

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

Appendix A Applicant Self-Assessment

Applicant Self-Assessment of Internal Controls and Risks

Montana Department of Agriculture will use this form to assess the risk of awarding a grant for each applicant. Answers will determine eligibility to qualify for funding and the extent to which special conditions may be applied (such as reporting frequency, site visits, etc.) should a grant be awarded. This form will not be provided to the SCBG grant reviewers and does not affect grant scoring.

Company/Organization Name	
Grant Project Contact	
Project Title	
Date Prepared	

Staff Qualifications

3 or more	1-3	Less than 1	Internal Control
			How many years of experience managing projects of this type does the Grant Project Contact have?
			How many years of experience does the Grant Project Contact have in working with federal grants?
Comments:			

Control Environment

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

Organizational Structure

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

Internal Controls

Yes	N/A	No	Internal Control
			Are written personnel policies maintained?
			Are processes in place to ensure that wages charged to the grant are reviewed and based on actual time and effort?

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

Allowable Activities & Costs

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

Equipment Management

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

Yes	N/A	No	Internal Control
			Are fixed asset records maintained that adequately classify and identify individual items, as well as detailing their location?
			Is someone assigned responsibility to ensure that all equipment is properly maintained?
			Is insurance coverage maintained for grant purchased equipment?

Comments:	
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Matching Funds or Program Income in your proposal.

Program Income

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

Yes	N/A	No	Internal Control
			Are cash/check receipt policies and procedures clearly documented and communicated to personnel?
			Are there policies and procedures to provide for the appropriate use of program income?
Comments:			

Audit

Yes	N/A	No	Internal Control
			Does your organization expend \$750,000 or more during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards?
			Does our organization engage in audits compliant with 2 CFR 200?
			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

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION									
Company/Organization Name <i>Must match the legal name registered for the provided Tax ID#.</i>									
DBA (if applicable)									
Business/Organization Type (select one only)	<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural producer or processor	<input type="checkbox"/> Local government agency							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit	<input type="checkbox"/> College or university							
	<input type="checkbox"/> State government	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:							
Tax ID #									
UEI # <i>This can be obtained at SAM.gov https://sam.gov/content/home</i>									
Grant Project Contact <i>For daily operations-PI, technician, or coordinator</i>									
Mailing Address									
Physical Address									
Phone									
Email									
Grant Management Contact <i>For Signatory Authority/Contract</i>									
Phone		Email							
PROJECT INFORMATION									
Project Title <i>Limited to <u>twelve</u> words</i>									
Project Start Date <i>No earlier than September 30, 2025</i>		Project End Date <i>No later than September 29, 2028</i>							
Crop(s) benefitting from project <i>AMS Site for more info</i>									
Will project benefit beginning farmers? *	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	Will project benefit socially disadvantaged farmers? **	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
Is this a multi-state project? ***	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	List partnering state(s)				

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

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

*****Multi-state** - A multi-state partnership is a project that implements activities with measurable outcomes that benefit two or more U.S. States and/or Territories.



Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM
PROJECT PROFILE TEMPLATE

AWARD YEARS 2022 FORWARD

The State Plan should include a series of project profiles that detail the necessary information to fulfill the goals and objectives of each project. The following information must be included in each project profile.

ORGANIZATION DETAIL

Organization Name

Organization Contact Name Phone

Organization Email

Organization Fax

Mailing Address

Street:

City: State: Zip:

PROJECT TITLE

DURATION OF PROJECT

Start Date

End Date

PROJECT PARTNER AND SUMMARY

Include a project summary of 250 words or less suitable for dissemination to the public. A Project Summary provides a very brief (one sentence, if possible) description of your project. A Project Summary includes:

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. The project’s purpose, deliverables, and expected outcomes; and
3. A description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill this goal.

FOR EXAMPLE: The ABC University will mitigate the spread of citrus greening (Huanglongbing) by developing scientifically- based practical measures to implement in a quarantine area and disseminating results to stakeholders through grower meetings and field days.

PROJECT PURPOSE

PROVIDE THE SPECIFIC ISSUE, PROBLEM, OR NEED THAT THE PROJECT WILL ADDRESS (5000 Character Limit)

PROVIDE A LISTING OF THE OBJECTIVES THAT THIS PROJECT HOPES TO ACHIEVE

Include as many objectives as needed. To add another objective, use the "+" button. To delete, use the "-" button.

+	#	Objective
-		
-		

PROJECT BENEFICIARIES

Estimate the number of project beneficiaries.

Does this project directly benefit underserved farmers as defined in the RFA? Does

this project directly benefit beginning farmers as defined in the RFA?

STATEMENT OF ENHANCING SPECIALTY CROPS

By checking the box to the right, I confirm that this project enhances the competitiveness of specialty crops in accordance with and defined by the Farm Bill. Further information regarding the definition of a specialty crop can be found at www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp.

CONTINUATION PROJECT INFORMATION

Does this project continue the efforts of a previously funded SCBGP project?

If you have selected "yes", please address the following:

PROVIDE THE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND PROJECT TITLES PREVIOUSLY FUNDED (1000 Character Limit)

DESCRIBE HOW THIS PROJECT WILL DIFFER FROM AND BUILD ON THE PREVIOUS EFFORTS (2500 Character Limit)

PROVIDE A SUMMARY (3 TO 5 SENTENCES) OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE PREVIOUS EFFORTS (1500 Character Limit)

PROVIDE LESSONS LEARNED ON POTENTIAL PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS (1500 Character Limit for each question)

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 (1500 Character Limit)

OTHER SUPPORT FROM FEDERAL OR STATE GRANT PROGRAMS

The SCBGP will not fund duplicative projects. 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?

IF YOUR PROJECT IS RECEIVING OR WILL POTENTIALLY RECEIVE FUNDS FROM ANOTHER FEDERAL OR STATE GRANT PROGRAM *(1500 Character Limit for each question)*

Identify the Federal or State grant program(s).

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

EXTERNAL PROJECT SUPPORT

Describe the specialty crop stakeholders who support this project and why (other than the applicant and organizations involved in the project). *(1500 Character Limit)*

EXPECTED MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

SELECT THE APPROPRIATE OUTCOME(S) AND INDICATOR(S)/SUB-INDICATOR(S)

You must choose at least one of the seven outcomes listed in the SCBGP Performance Measures, which were approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to evaluate the performance of the SCBGP on a national level.

OUTCOME MEASURE(S)

1. INCREASING CONSUMPTION AND CONSUMER PURCHASING OF SPECIALTY CROPS

2. INCREASING ACCESS TO SPECIALTY CROPS AND EXPANDING SPECIALTY CROP PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

3. INCREASE FOOD SAFETY KNOWLEDGE AND PROCESSES

4. IMPROVE PEST AND DISEASE CONTROL PROCESSES

5. DEVELOP NEW SEED VARIETIES AND SPECIALTY CROPS

6. EXPAND SPECIALTY CROP RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

7. IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY OF SPECIALTY CROPS

ADDITIONAL APPROVED OUTCOME (IF APPLICABLE)

MISCELLANEOUS OUTCOME MEASURE *(1500 Character Limit)*

In the unlikely event that the outcomes and indicators above the selected outcomes are not relevant to your project, you must develop a project-specific outcome(s) and indicator(s) which will be subject to approval by AMS.

DATA COLLECTION TO REPORT ON OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS *(2000 Character Limit)*

Explain how you will collect the required data to report on the outcome and indicator in the space below. Please refer to SCBGP Performance Measures for information on data collection tips for each outcome indicator selected.

BUDGET NARRATIVE

All expenses described in this Budget Narrative must be associated with expenses that will be covered by the SCBGP. If any matching funds will be used and a description of their use is required by the State department of agriculture, the expenses to be covered with matching funds must be described separately. Applicants should review the Request for Applications (RFA) section on *Funding Considerations* prior to developing their budget narrative.

Expense Category	Funds Requested
Personnel	
Fringe Benefits	
Travel	
Equipment	
Supplies	
Contractual	
Other	
Direct Costs Sub-Total	
Indirect Costs	
Total Budget	

PERSONNEL

List the organization’s employees whose time and effort can be specifically identified and easily and accurately traced to project activities that enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. If the listed employee’s salary/position will not be paid with SCBGP funds list \$0.00 in the Funds Requested column. See the RFA section on *Presenting Direct and Indirect Costs Consistently and Allowable and Unallowable Costs and Activities* for further guidance. Fill personnel information in space below as needed.

+	#	Personnel Name/Title	Level of Effort (# of hours OR % FTE)	Funds Requested
-				
Personnel Subtotal				

PERSONNEL JUSTIFICATION (2000 Character Limit)

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

FOR EXAMPLE:

Personnel 1: Description and justification

Personnel 2: Description and justification

FRINGE BENEFITS

Provide the fringe benefit rates, in percentages, for each of the employees described in the Personnel section that will be paid with SCBGP funds.

+	#	Fringe Benefits Name/Title	Fringe Benefit Rate	Funds Requested
-				
Fringe Subtotal				

TRAVEL

Explain the purpose for each Trip Request. Please note that travel costs are limited to those allowed by formal organizational policy; in the case of air travel, project participants must use the lowest reasonable commercial airfares. For recipient organizations that have no formal travel policy and for-profit recipients, allowable travel costs may not exceed those established by the Federal Travel Regulation, issued by GSA, including the maximum per diem for lodging and meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) and mileage rates prescribed in those regulations. This information is available at <http://www.gsa.gov/travel>. See the RFA section on *Allowable and Unallowable Costs and Activities* for further guidance. For all trips, please list each cost item (airfare, car rental, meals, hotel, etc.) associated with that trip number on a separate line. Please do not combine costs like airfare and hotels on the same line.

+	#	Trip Destination	Type of Expense (e.g., airfare, car rental, hotel, etc.)	Unit of Measure (e.g., days, nights, miles)	Number of Units	Cost per Unit	Number of Travelers Claiming Expense	Funds Requested
-								
Travel Subtotal								

TRAVEL JUSTIFICATION (2000 Character Limit)

For each trip listed in the above table, describe the purpose of this trip and how it will achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project. Be sure to include approximately when and where the trip will occur and who will be traveling. If the location is not yet known, please use "to be determined (TBD)". If you are not using GSA rates, please include how you arrived at the rate numbers. For example, it might be including tax for the hotel or University travel policy. Add more trips by copying and pasting the existing listing or delete trips that aren't necessary.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Trip 1: (Approximate Date of Travel MM/YYYY), justification

Trip 2: (Approximate Date of Travel MM/YYYY), justification

CONFORMING WITH YOUR TRAVEL POLICY

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

EQUIPMENT

Describe any special purpose equipment to be purchased or rented under the grant. "Special purpose equipment" is tangible, nonexpendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds \$5,000 per unit and is used only for research, medical, scientific, or other technical activities. If the acquisition cost of the item is less than \$5,000 then the item is considered a supply and should be listed in that section. Rental of "general purpose equipment" must also be described in this section. Purchase of general purpose equipment is not allowable under this grant. See the RFA section on *Allowable and Unallowable Costs and Activities* for further guidance.

+	#	Equipment Item Description	Rental or Purchase	Acquisition Date	Funds Requested
-					
Equipment Subtotal					

EQUIPMENT JUSTIFICATION (2500 Character Limit)

For each Equipment item listed in the above table describe how this equipment will be used to achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project. Please be sure to address the allow-ability criteria for each equipment item as indicated in the [AMS Terms and Conditions](#).

FOR EXAMPLE:

Equipment 1: Description and justification
 Equipment 2: Description and justification

SUPPLIES

List the materials, supplies, and fabricated parts costing less than \$5,000 per unit, and describe how they will support the purpose and goal of the proposal and enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. If the actual cost per unit or number of units is not known, please use your best estimate. This will assist Grants Management Specialists to better determine allowability. See the RFA section on *Allowable and Unallowable Costs and Activities*, for further guidance.

+	#	Supplies Item Description	Cost per Unit	Number of Units	Acquisition Date	Funds Requested
-						
Supplies Subtotal						

SUPPLIES JUSTIFICATION (3000 Character Limit)

Describe the purpose of each supply listed in the table above and how it is necessary for the completion of the project's objective(s) and outcome(s). If it comes as a set, please include that in the justification. If you are combining costs (for example combining 15 items into one cost, you will need to provide a breakdown of items and how you arrived at the price listed in the table above).

FOR EXAMPLE:

Supply 1: Description and justification
 Supply 2: Description and justification

CONTRACTUAL/CONSULTANT

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

Create a new line for each contractor/consultant. Provide a list of contractors/consultants, detailing out the name, hourly or flat rate, and overall cost of the services performed. Please note that any statutory limitations on indirect costs also apply to contractors and consultants.

+	#	Contractual Name/Organization	Hourly Rate/Flat Rate	Rate Value	Funds Requested
-					
Contractual/Consultant Subtotal					

CONTRACTUAL JUSTIFICATION *(2000 Character Limit)*

Provide for each of your real or anticipated contractors listed above a description of the project activities each will accomplish to meet the objectives and outcomes of the project. Each section should also include a justification for why contractual/consultant services are to be used to meet the anticipated outcomes and objectives. 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, provide a justification for the expenses. This limit does not include fringe benefits, travel, indirect costs, or other expenses. See the RFA section on *Allowable and Unallowable Costs and Activities* for acceptable justifications. If the Contractor has not yet been identified or is TBD, please indicate how you will announce the opportunity, evaluate candidates, and select the contractor for the position/work to be completed.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Contractual 1: Description and justification

Contractual 2: Description and justification

CONFORMING WITH YOUR PROCUREMENT STANDARDS

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.

OTHER

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

+	#	Other Item Description	Cost per Unit	Number of Units	Acquisition Date	Funds Requested
-						
Other Subtotal						

OTHER JUSTIFICATION (2000 Character Limit)

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). For meals the costs must be reasonable, and a justification must be included to show that such activity maintains the continuity of the meeting and to do otherwise will impose arduous conditions on the meeting participants.

FOR EXAMPLE:
 Other 1: Description and justification
 Other 2: Description and justification

INDIRECT COSTS

The indirect cost rate must not exceed 8 percent of the total Federal funds provided under the award per section 101(k)(2) of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 ([7 U.S.C. § 1621 note](#)), as amended by section 10107 of the Farm Bill. Indirect costs are any costs that are incurred for common or joint objectives which cannot be readily identified with an individual project, program, or organizational activity. They generally include facilities operation and maintenance costs, depreciation, and administrative expenses. See the RFA section on *Limit on Administrative Costs and Presenting Direct and Indirect Costs Consistently* for further guidance.

Indirect Cost Rate	Funds Requested
Indirect Subtotal	

PROGRAM INCOME

Program income is gross income --earned by a recipient or subrecipient 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 (this includes items sold at cost if the cost of producing the item was funded in whole or partially with grant funds); registration fees for conferences, etc.

Describe how program income will be used to further the objectives of this project during the performance period. Any income generated must be reinvested back into the project and not set aside or reserved for future expenses after the grant ends.

+	Source/Nature of Program Income	Description of how you will reinvest the program income into the project to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops	Estimated Income
-			
Program Income Total			