APPENDIX D – APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Only electronic applications may be submitted to the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program-Farm Bill (SCBGP-FB) via www.grants.gov. All applications submitted to the SCBGP-FB must contain the applicable elements outlined in these guidelines. The following checklist has been prepared to assist in ensuring that the application is complete prior to submission:

- ☐ Have you followed the guidelines for completing your State Plan provided in the SCBGP-FB Guidance Document Appendix C – State Plan Format, and properly completed the SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B application package on www.grants.gov?
- ☐ Have you appropriately contacted your State Department of Agriculture's Government Business Primary Point of Contact to enable you to submit your application through www.grants.gov?
  If you do not know who the State Department of Agriculture's Government Business Primary Point of Contact is, then you can ascertain this information at www.ccr.gov. ***Please note that this information is mandatory and its absence will delay your ability to submit online.***

REQUIRED FORMS

- ☐ Is the SF-424 included and accurately completed (see Sample SF-424 (PDF))?
- ☐ Is the start date of your grant period no later than September 30, 2012 (block 17 a. on SF-424) and the end date of your grant period (block 17 b. on SF-424) no later than September 29, 2015?
- ☐ Have you included each of your projects, including grant administration, in the SF-424A form? Is the SF-424A accurately completed (see Sample SF-424A (PDF))? Please note that if you have more than four projects, you will need to attach and submit the completed workbook containing all additional projects. www.grants.gov. You may submit all projects in one SF-424A attachment available on the SCBGP website at www.ams.usda.gov/scbgp or via this link (Excel).
- ☐ Is an SF-424B included (see Sample SF-424B (PDF))?

BUDGET

- ☐ Does the total budget equal the State's available grant allocation?
- ☐ Are the total indirect costs charged to the grant equal to or less than the limit on indirect costs published in the Federal Register notice each fiscal year?

STATE PLAN

COVER PAGE

- ☐ Is a cover page provided that indicates the State Department of Agriculture's name and the project administrator's contact information?

OUTREACH

Outreach to Specialty Crop Stakeholders to Identify Funding Priorities

- ☐ Is a plan included indicating what steps were taken to conduct outreach to specialty crop stakeholders to receive and consider public comment to identify state funding priority needs, including any focus on multi-state projects in enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops?
- ☐ Are the funding priority needs identified?

Outreach to Socially Disadvantaged and Beginning Farmers

- ☐ Does the plan include what methods were used to identify socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers within your State?
- ☐ Does the plan include what methods were used to reach out to these groups about the SCBGP-FB?
- ☐ Are project titles identified for the projects that directly benefit either a socially disadvantaged or beginning farmer?
- ☐ If outreach was not performed to these groups and/or to identify funding priorities, does the plan indicate why it was not?

COMPETITIVE PROCESS

- ☐ Does this section describe what methods were used to solicit proposals to meet identified specialty crop funding priority needs?
- ☐ Is the number of grant proposals received indicated in this section?
- ☐ Does this section indicate how members were selected to ensure that the review panel consisted of a community of experts in various fields, who were qualified and able to perform impartial reviews?
- ☐ Does this section include what fields the review panel members were from?
- ☐ Does this section indicate you ensured review panel members were free from conflicts of interest?
- ☐ Did you indicate if results of the peer review panel were given to the grant applicants ensuring the confidentiality of the review panel members?
- ☐ If a competitive grant process was not used, does this section include why it was not?

GRANT ADMINISTRATION

- ☐ Does this section indicate how and when the State department of agriculture will oversee project activities to ensure proper and efficient administration of grant funds?
- ☐ If funds are used for direct grant administration, is a budget narrative breakdown included?
- ☐ If funds are used for direct grant administration, is the "project" budget indicated on the SF-424A?
- ☐ If indirect costs are charged to the grant, are the indirect costs included on the SF-424A?

PROJECT PROFILES

Each project should be outlined as a separate project profile. For example, Project 1 should include a section for the project title, abstract, partner organization, project purpose, potential impact, expected measureable outcomes, work plan, budget narrative, project oversight, and project commitment and then project two should include a section for the project title, abstract, partner organization, project purpose, etc.

ABSTRACT AND PROJECT TILE

- ☐ Is a project title included?
- ☐ Is an abstract of 200 words or less suitable for dissemination to the public included?

PARTNER ORGANIZATION

- ☐ Is the name of the organization that will partner with the State department of agriculture to lead and execute the project included?

PROJECT PURPOSE

- ☐ Does the project enhance the competitiveness of eligible U.S. or U.S. territory grown specialty crops?
- ☐ Does this section describe the specific issue, problem, or need to be addressed?
- ☐ Does this section discuss why the project is important and timely?
- ☐ Are the objectives of the project clearly stated?
- ☐ If the project has the potential to enhance the competitiveness of non-specialty crops, does this section indicate the methods or processes the applicant will use to ensure all grant funds will solely enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops?
- ☐ If this project was previously funded by the SCBGP or SCBGP-FB, how does this project differ from the previously funded project?
- ☐ Does this section include a statement indicating whether the project has been submitted to or funded by another Federal or State grant program?
- ☐ If the project has been submitted to or funded by another Federal or State grant program, does this section identify which Federal and/or State grant programs and describe how the project differs from and supplements efforts of the SCBGP-FB and the other Federal or State grant program and does not duplicate funding efforts?

POTENTIAL IMPACT

- ☐ Are the specialty crop beneficiaries of this project adequately discussed?
- ☐ Have the number of specialty crop project beneficiaries been appropriately addressed?
- ☐ Does this section address how the specialty crop beneficiaries will be impacted by the project?
- ☐ If available, is a potential economic impact provided under this section?
- ☐ Does the project benefit more than one commercial product or individual, or organization?

EXPECTED MEASUREABLE OUTCOMES

- ☐ Has at least one distinct, quantifiable, and measurable outcome that defines an event or condition that is external to the project and that is of direct importance to the intended beneficiaries been provided?
- ☐ Do the outcomes include a goal, performance measure, baseline, and a target, if applicable?
- ☐ Does this section describe how performance toward meeting the outcomes will be monitored?
- ☐ Are expected measurable outcomes long term and outside the grant period? If so, indicate how monitoring will occur after the grant period ends without SCBGP-FB funding.

WORK PLAN

- ☐ Does the work plan adequately describe the activities necessary to accomplish the project objectives?
- ☐ Does the work plan indicate who will do the work of each activity, including subgrantees, and/or contractors?
- ☐ Does the work plan include the performance monitoring/data collection plan activity described in the expected measureable outcome section?
- ☐ Does the work plan include timelines for each activity (at least month and year) and beginning and end dates for the project?
- ☐ Does the timeline show that the project will be completed in 3 years and/or within the grant period?

BUDGET NARRATIVE

- ☐ Does the narrative include applicable budget information for personnel, fringe benefits, contractual, travel, equipment, supplies, indirect costs, and program income if shown on form 424A?
- ☐ Does the budget narrative demonstrate that grant funds are being expended on eligible grant activities that meet the purpose of the program?
- ☐ Are costs allowable, reasonable, and allocable?
- ☐ Are matching funds shown separately in the budget narrative?
- ☐ If personnel costs are budgeted:
  - Does the narrative include each project participant's title;
  - % FTE and corresponding salary; and
  - total personnel costs?
- ☐ If fringe benefits are budgeted, does the narrative include:
  - the rate of fringe benefits for each project participant's salary described under personnel; and
  - total fringe benefit costs?
- ☐ If travel is budgeted:
  - Do travel expenses follow the grant applicant's written travel policies or U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) rates at http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100000?
  - Does the narrative include the destination; purpose of trip; number of trips; number of people traveling; number of days traveling; estimated airfare costs; estimated ground transportation costs; estimated lodging and meals costs; estimated mileage rate and costs for the travel if applicable; and total travel costs?
  - Does the narrative include the total travel costs?
- ☐ If special purpose equipment is budgeted (defined as purchases or rentals of $5,000 or more):
  - Does the special purpose equipment solely benefit eligible specialty crops and the specialty crop industry and not a particular commercial product or provide a profit to a single organization, institution, or individual?
  - Does the narrative include an itemized list of equipment purchases or rentals, along with a brief narrative of the intended use of each item and the total cost of all equipment and rentals?
  - Does the narrative include a total of the special equipment budget?
- ☐ If supplies are budgeted (defined as purchases under $5,000), does the budget narrative include an itemized list of supplies and the estimated dollar amount for each item, as well as a total of all supply costs?

- ☐ If contractual is budgeted, does the narrative provide: a short description of the services each contract covers; indicate if the cost is a flat rate fee OR total hourly fee; include the flat rate cost OR hourly rate; list general categories of items the contract covers such as professional services, travel, lodging, indirect costs, etc.; and include total contractual costs?
- ☐ If contractual costs are hourly rates, do they exceed the salary of a GS-14 step 10 Federal employee in your area? (For more information please go to www.opm.gov and click on *Salaries and Wages*.)
- ☐ If hourly contractual costs exceed the salary of a GS-14 step 10 Federal employee in your area, is a brief description provided that meets an acceptable justification? Please refer to Appendix C: State Plan Format for additional information.
- ☐ Under the "Other" cost category, if applicable, are communications such as mailings, express mail, faxes, and telephone long distance charges estimated? Are speaker fees included and a description of the services they are providing? Are estimated costs of publications described, including the number of publications anticipated? Are estimated costs of performance data collection included? Are all "Other" costs totaled?
- ☐ If meals are budgeted for reasons other than meals associated with travel per diem, is there an adequate justification for why these costs should not be considered entertainment costs. Please refer to Appendix C: State Plan Format for additional information.
- ☐ Do grant funds supplement the expenditure of State funds in support of specialty crops grown in the State, rather than replace State funds?
- ☐ If indirect costs are budgeted, are they totaled and less than the project limit published in the Federal Register notice each fiscal year?
- ☐ If program income will be generated, does the narrative indicate the nature or source of program income, estimate the amount of program income, and describe how the income will be used to further enhance the competiveness of specialty crops?

PROJECT PARTNER OVERSIGHT

- ☐ Have you indicated who or what organization will oversee the project activities?
- ☐ How will oversight of the project be performed? For example, will weekly or monthly meetings be held to discuss performance toward the completion of the project?

PROJECT COMMITMENT

- ☐ Have you indicated what specialty crop stakeholders outside the organization support this project and how?
- ☐ Have you indicated how all project stakeholders will work toward meeting goals and outcome measures?

MULTI-STATE PROJECT

- ☐ Is this a multi-state project? If NO, then this section is not required.
- ☐ If YES, which other states are participating?
- ☐ If YES, does this section describe how each State will collaborate effectively to complete the project?
- ☐ If YES, does this section indicate the percentage of the budget covered by each State?
- ☐ If YES, does this section indicate the State taking the coordinating role?

- ☐ If YES, did all States involved in the project submit the project in their State Plan and indicate the percent of the budget that will be covered by each State?