



Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Fiscal Year 2014 Request for Applications

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-AMS-SCBGP-2014

Application Due Date: July 9, 2014

Program Solicitation Information

Funding Opportunity Title: Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – Farm Bill

Funding Opportunity Number: USDA-AMS-SCBGP-2014

Announcement Type: Initial

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 10.170

Dates: Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on July 9, 2014 through grants.gov. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered for funding.

Executive Summary: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), requests applications for the fiscal year (FY) 2014 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) to award grants to eligible State departments of agriculture to carry out projects that solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Approximately \$67 million, less USDA administrative costs, is available to fund applications under this solicitation.

This request for applications identifies the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a SCBGP grant.

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1.0 FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

1.1 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) 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). SCBGP is currently implemented under [7 CFR part 1291](#) (published March 27, 2009; 74 FR 13313).

1.2 PURPOSE

The SCBGP assists 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 in solely enhancing the competitiveness of U.S. specialty crops. Specialty crops are defined as fruits and vegetables, dried fruit, tree nuts, horticulture, nursery crops (including floriculture). A State department of agriculture is the agency, commission, or department of a State government responsible for agriculture within the State.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) administers the SCBGP. USDA encourages states to develop projects solely to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops 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.

2.0 AWARD INFORMATION

2.1 TYPE OF FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

AMS SCBGP will use a Grant Agreement to provide support to successful SCBGP applications.

2.2 TYPE OF APPLICATIONS

New application. The AMS SCBGP will review all new applications for conformance with the criteria in [5.0 Application Review Information](#). AMS may require the applicant to provide additional information or clarification by a specified deadline.

2.3 AVAILABLE FUNDING

The amount of approximately \$67 million, less USDA administrative costs, will be available to fund applications in fiscal year (FY) 14 for the SCBGP.

2.4 GRANT PERIOD DURATION

The AMS SCBGP will award funds for a grant period of up to 3 years in length. The grant period must begin no later than September 30, 2014 and end no later than September 29, 2017, three years from the start date. The applicant must indicate the start and end dates on the SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance" in box #17. AMS SCBGP encourages State departments of agriculture to allow ample time for completion of all projects.

2.5 BLOCK GRANT AMOUNTS AVAILABLE TO EACH APPLICANT

Each eligible State department of agriculture applicant that submits an application that the AMS SCBGP reviews and accepts is eligible to receive the available grant allocation to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops as indicated below. Each State department of agriculture is eligible to receive an estimated base grant of approximately \$221,328.44 and an amount based on the average of the most recent available value of specialty crop cash receipts in the State (2012 calendar year estimates) and the acreage of specialty crop production in the State (2007 Census of Agriculture). The data source for specialty crop cash receipts and acreage is from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service and National Agricultural Statistics Service.

State Department of Agriculture	Available Grant Allocation
Alabama	\$ 483,202.15
Alaska	\$ 231,963.39
American Samoa	\$ 262,706.87
Arizona	\$ 1,100,428.11

State Department of Agriculture	Available Grant Allocation
Arkansas	\$ 350,294.21
California	\$ 19,761,117.56
Colorado	\$ 835,856.92
Connecticut	\$ 395,398.17
Delaware	\$ 336,755.94
District of Columbia	\$ 221,328.44
Florida	\$ 4,552,723.92
Georgia	\$ 1,393,718.92
Guam	\$ 223,434.76
Hawaii	\$ 469,614.89
Idaho	\$ 1,914,955.87
Illinois	\$ 654,970.71
Indiana	\$ 453,297.54
Iowa	\$ 307,610.17
Kansas	\$ 313,801.56
Kentucky	\$ 302,121.14
Louisiana	\$ 436,132.19
Maine	\$ 600,343.41
Maryland	\$ 502,785.48
Massachusetts	\$ 456,716.84
Michigan	\$ 1,981,817.31

State Department of Agriculture	Available Grant Allocation
Minnesota	\$ 1,389,725.01
Mississippi	\$ 479,540.04
Missouri	\$ 457,798.79
Montana	\$ 986,229.53
Nebraska	\$ 597,375.99
Nevada	\$ 300,952.49
New Hampshire	\$ 272,784.44
New Jersey	\$ 809,716.73
New Mexico	\$ 548,734.17
New York	\$ 1,410,387.64
North Carolina	\$ 1,169,378.27
North Dakota	\$ 3,135,521.17
Northern Mariana Islands	\$ 223,187.88
Ohio	\$ 653,493.18
Oklahoma	\$ 691,614.00
Oregon	\$ 1,949,764.89
Pennsylvania	\$ 1,039,933.92
Puerto Rico	\$ 522,655.00
Rhode Island	\$ 255,543.19
South Carolina	\$ 599,654.00
South Dakota	\$ 309,899.19

State Department of Agriculture	Available Grant Allocation
Tennessee	\$ 517,242.01
Texas	\$ 1,905,015.87
U.S. Virgin Islands	\$ 222,513.02
Utah	\$ 339,318.30
Vermont	\$ 278,282.61
Virginia	\$ 564,828.97
Washington	\$ 4,259,686.23
West Virginia	\$ 269,871.84
Wisconsin	\$ 1,403,956.26
Wyoming	\$ 290,559.83

3.0 ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

3.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

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 are eligible to apply for funds. A State department of agriculture is the agency, commission, or department of a State government responsible for agriculture within the State.

AMS expects that State departments of agriculture will consult with specialty crop growers, processors, and/or distributors before developing SCBGP project applications to ensure maximum public input and benefit. These stakeholders should play an important role in development of project goals and objectives, in implementing the project plan, and in evaluating and disseminating project results and outcomes.

3.2 SOLELY ENHANCE THE COMPETITIVENESS OF U.S. OR U.S. TERRITORY GROWN SPECIALTY CROPS

Project(s) must **solely** enhance the competitiveness of U.S. or U.S. territory-grown specialty crops in either domestic or foreign markets. See the [SCBGP website](#) for a definition of specialty crops and processed products, including a list of eligible specialty crops and ineligible commodities. Each project must identify at least one expected measurable outcome that specifically demonstrates the project’s impact in solely enhancing the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops.

3.3 PROVIDE SOLUTIONS THAT LEAD TO MEASURABLE BENEFITS

The AMS SCBGP encourages State departments of agriculture to give priority to projects that include a budget line item to enable the subrecipient to measure the quantifiable outcomes of the project, including the likelihood that the project will provide solutions that lead to measurable benefits to specialty crop growers and consumers.

3.4 BENEFIT MORE THAN ONE PRODUCT OR ORGANIZATION

Applications for grant funds should describe how the project potentially affects and produces measurable outcomes for the specialty crop industry and/or the public rather than a single organization, institution, or individual.

AMS SCBGP 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.

The following are some examples of acceptable and unacceptable projects:

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 State 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 State requests funding to contract with a university 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.

3.5 GROWER-LEVEL PROJECTS

The AMS SCBGP encourages State departments of agriculture to prioritize and further expand funding to projects that are supported by and address the needs of U.S. specialty crop growers. For example, if the State department of agriculture receives multiple research project or multiple marketing project proposals, AMS SCBGP encourages State departments of agriculture to prioritize the proposals supported by grower-level groups.

3.6 PROJECTS ATTEMPTING TO DISPARAGE THE WORK OF ANOTHER ORGANIZATION

Projects where one organization specifically attempts to disparage the mission, goals, and/or actions of another organization are unallowable.

3.7 COST-SHARING AND MATCHING

Cost-sharing or matching refers to the portion of project costs not paid by Federal funds which are claimed to meet a cost-sharing or matching requirement. The AMS SCBGP does not have a Federal cost-sharing or matching requirement.

However, in some cases, an applicant or sub-applicant proposes cost-sharing or matching contributions as a mechanism to ensure all grant funds will solely enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops. In this situation, the recipient or subrecipient of Federal funds must keep adequate records to identify and document the specific costs or contributions proposed to meet the match or cost-share, the source of funding or contributions, and document how the valuation was determined.

3.8 OUTREACH TO IDENTIFY FUNDING PRIORITIES

The AMS SCBGP encourages State departments of agriculture to perform outreach prior to the development and release of the state's request for proposals or applications to interested parties, including socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers, through a transparent process of receiving and considering public comment to identify state SCBGP funding priorities in solely enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops. The State department of agriculture should conduct this outreach to ensure that grant applications submitted to the AMS SCBGP are developed with proven and justified public support.

Beginning Farmer or Rancher is an individual or entity that has not operated a farm or ranch for more than 10 years and substantially participates in the operation.

Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher is 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.

3.9 COMPETITIVE GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

The AMS SCBGP encourages State departments of agriculture to develop their State Plans through a competitive review process to ensure maximum public input and benefit. The competitive review process should include the use of an independent review panel of experts or qualified individuals, overseen by State department of agriculture officials, to evaluate and score applications and recommend project proposals for selection. The review panel should also provide a recommended award amount for project proposals.

This includes the factors and reasons for selecting an applicant and any changes in project proposal ranks/scores that may occur during the review process. All documentation affecting the decision to approve, disapprove, defer, or otherwise not fund an application should be maintained in an accessible, centralized program file.

Review panel members must be free from conflicts of interest and conduct fair and impartial reviews. The AMS SCBGP encourages State departments of agriculture to require and keep on file written conflict of interest disclosures from their review panel members.

Individuals that have a conflict of interest may have:

- Served as advisors/advisees of the applicant;
- Collaborated with the applicant over a designated amount of time; currently affiliated with, previously employed by, or are being considered for employment at the institution(s) of the applicant(s);
- Hold a personal/familial relationship with the applicant(s); or
- In recent years, participated in a consulting/financial arrangement with the applicant.

Program staff who are directly involved with the management of the grant program or who meet any of the criteria above, should also not participate in the review panel. Conflicts of interest tend to diminish the credibility of the selection process and leave the State vulnerable to challenges about the fairness of their competitive review process.

In addition, the AMS SCBGP encourages State departments of agriculture to notify successful and unsuccessful grant applicants about the outcome of the competitive process as it relates to the applicant's proposal.

Finally, the AMS SCBGP encourages State departments of agriculture during their competitive review process to review funding requests carefully for activities funded previously to ensure:

- The projects are likely to become self-sustaining and not indefinitely dependent upon SCBGP funds;
- Funding decisions are based on the applicant's/subrecipient's past performance; and
- Specialty crop stakeholders, other than the applicant, individuals and organizations involved in the project, support the continuation of the project. Examples include:
 - If the applicant is a university and the research proposal will establish control techniques for a specific pecan disease, the proposal might identify that a pecan growers association supports the project because this was the organization's number one research priority.
 - If the applicant is a non-profit association requesting funds to promote apples, the proposal might identify specific apple growers that support the project because they are interested in increasing their market share.

3.10 MULTI-STATE PARTNERSHIPS

Multi-state partnerships are encouraged and should provide solutions to problems that cross state boundaries such as, but not limited to, addressing good agricultural practices, food safety, research on crop productivity or quality, pest and disease management, or commodity-specific projects addressing common issues in multi-state regions.

A multi-state partnership is a project that implements activities with measureable outcomes that benefit two or more U.S. states and/or territories. A multi-state partnership proposal must explain the impact the project will have on a multi-state or national level within the [Potential Impact](#) section of the [Project Profile Template](#).

3.11 SUPPLANTING

AMS SCBGP grant funds must supplement the expenditure of State funds in support of specialty crops grown in that State, rather than replace State funds.

General Supplanting Definition. A State organization reduces State funds for an activity specifically because Federal funds are available (or expected to be available) to fund that same activity. Federal funds must supplement existing State funds for program activities and may not replace State funds appropriated or allocated for the same purpose. Additionally, Federal funding may not replace State funding that is required by law. In those instances where a question of supplanting arises, the applicant or recipient will be required to substantiate that the reduction in non-Federal resources occurred for reasons other than the receipt or expected receipt of Federal funds.

- **Example:** State funds are appropriated for a stated purpose and Federal funds are awarded for that same purpose. (If a state has \$50.00 budgeted for a specialty crop program and the Federal Government awards a \$100.00 grant for the same specialty crop program, the total project must expend \$150.00 – the State cannot remove the original \$50.00 and use it for something else).

3.12 DEFINITION OF A PROJECT

A project is a set of interrelated tasks with a cohesive distinct, specified, and defined goal. It follows a planned, organized approach over a fixed period of time and within specific limitations (cost, performance/quality, etc.). Additionally, it uses resources that are specifically allocated to the work of the project and usually involves a team of people.

Projects are different from other ongoing operations in an organization because, unlike operations, projects have a definitive beginning and end - they have a limited duration. One way to think about this is that a project has an overarching goal that you want to accomplish through a series of individual activities or tasks. Examples of projects could include:

- Researching new cultivars
- Marketing apples through a targeted promotional campaign

Activities or tasks that could be a part of such projects might include:

- Hiring personnel
- Purchasing special purpose equipment
- Holding a workshop
- Planting specialty crops
- Distributing product promotional materials

4.0 APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

4.1 REQUESTING AN APPLICATION PACKAGE

The AMS SCBGP posts a synopsis of each new funding opportunity at [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). The SCBGP may also include a link on the program website at www.ams.usda.gov/scbgp. In addition, the SCBGP will send the funding opportunity announcement directly to each eligible applicant organization.

4.2 CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Those State departments of agriculture interested in submitting an application for the SCBGP must submit the following components and associated attachments via Grants.gov.

4.2.1 SF-424 APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE (REQUIRED)

Most information blocks on the required form are either self-explanatory or adequately explained in the instructions. However, for SCBGP applications, you must use the following supplemental instructions associated with specific blocks on form SF-424. See Sample SF-424 ([PDF](#)) to view a completed form.

Block	Instruction
#1 Type of Submission	Check Application
#2 Type of Application	Check New
#4 and #5	Not applicable
# 8c Organizational DUNS	Applicant Information refers to the State department of agriculture submitting the application and to the employee responsible for the project. Obtaining a DUNS Number, A Guide for Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Applicants.
#8d Address	Enter the State department of agriculture street address. P.O. Boxes will not be accepted. Enter a 9-digit zip code.
#10 Name of Federal Agency	AMS, USDA
#11 Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number	Enter 10.170 – Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – Farm Bill.
#12 Funding Opportunity Number	Enter USDA-AMS-SCBGP-2014.
#13 Competition Identification Number	Not applicable
#14 Areas Affected by Project	Enter cities, counties, states affected by project
#15 Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project	A detailed description of each project is not necessary.
#16a Congressional Districts for Applicant	Enter the Congressional district where your main office is located.
#16b Congressional Districts for Program/Project	Enter the Congressional district where your project is performed. Write "All" if the projects will be performed in more than one location.
#17 Proposed Project Start Date and End Date	Your grant period cannot be more than three years in length. The grant period must begin no later than September 30, 2014 and end no later than September 29, 2017.
#18 Estimated Funding	Federal =Total Specialty Crop Block Grant funds requested
#19 Is Applicant Subject to Review by State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?	This initiative is not subject to intergovernmental review.

4.2.2 SF-424B ASSURANCES FOR NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS (REQUIRED)

The authorized certifying official must sign this form. See Sample SF-424B ([PDF](#)) to view a completed form.

4.2.3 STATE PLAN NARRATIVE (REQUIRED)

Narrative Format

Page size for the narrative must be 8.5 inches (21.59 cm) by 11 inches (27.94 cm). The acceptable font size is 11 or 12 pitch with all margins at 1 inch (2.5 cm). The State Plan should include a series of project profiles that details

the necessary information to fulfill the goals and objectives of the project. For examples of acceptable formats, please see "[State Department of Agriculture Grant Administration](#)", "[Project Profile](#)", and the "[Sample State Plan](#)".

Cover Page

The cover page must be included at the beginning of the application and include:

- Name of the State Plan Coordinator for the State Department of Agriculture
- Name of Organization Adminstrating the State Plan

Please see the "[State Department of Agriculture Grant Administration](#)" acceptable format for further guidance on preparing the State department of agriculture sections of the State Plan.

Outreach Plan

Outreach to Specialty Crop Stakeholders to Identify Funding Priorities

The State department of agriculture applicant must describe how it conducted outreach prior to the release of their request for proposals or applications to identify funding priority needs in enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops. Address the following:

- What steps did you take to conduct such outreach?
- What are those identified funding priority needs?
- If you did not conduct outreach to identify funding priorities, provide an explanation as to why you did not.

Outreach to Socially Disadvantaged and Beginning Farmers

The State department of agriculture applicant must provide a description of the affirmative steps it took to conduct outreach to socially disadvantaged farmers and beginning farmers of specialty crops about the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Address the following:

- What methods did you use to identify socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers within your State?
- What methods did you use to reach out to these groups about the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program?
- Identify the projects (by project title) included in the State Plan that directly benefit either socially disadvantaged or beginning farmers.
- If you did not conduct outreach to socially disadvantaged farmers and beginning farmers, provide an explanation as to why you did not.

Competitive Review Process

The State department of agriculture applicant must provide the following information.

- What methods did you use to solicit proposals that met identified specialty crop funding priority needs?
- How many grant proposals did you receive?
- How did you select reviewers to ensure the review panel consisted of technical experts from various fields, who were qualified and able to perform high quality and fair reviews?
- What fields of expertise did the review panel members represent (i.e., botanists, food nutrition experts,

commodity association representatives, etc.)?

- How did you document and ensure members on the review panel were free from conflicts of interest (i.e., reviewers signed a conflict of interest statement)?
- Describe how you will provide or did provide results of the peer review panel to the grant applicants ensuring the confidentiality of the review panel members?
- If you did not conduct a competitive grant process, provide an explanation as to why you did not.

State Department of Agriculture Grant Administration Budget Narrative

- Provide the start date and end date (month/year) of your grant administration activities and the estimated amount of funds needed for grant administration associated with the State Plan for each grant year (up to 3 years).
- Provide a budget narrative for costs associated with your administration (i.e. personnel, fringe benefits, travel, special purpose equipment, supplies, contractual, other, and indirect costs) of the State Plan.
- Keep in mind that indirect costs requested by sub-applicants plus indirect administration costs requested by the State department of agriculture must not exceed 8 percent of the state's grant request.
- Please review previous State Plans to ensure that you are not requesting grant administration costs for the same activities for the same period as previously awarded. The SCBGP will not fund duplicative costs.

Please see the "[Project Profile](#)" acceptable format for further guidance on preparing each project proposal.

Project Title

The title must adequately describe the project in 15 words or less.

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.

Project Partner Organization

Include the name of the applicant organization that will establish an agreement or contractual arrangement with the State department of agriculture to lead and execute the project.

Project Purpose

This section must address the following:

- What is the specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address?
- Why is the project important and timely?
- What are the objectives of the project?
- If any of the project activities or costs has the potential to enhance the competitiveness of non-specialty crops (i.e., farmers' market, general buy local, CSA etc.) 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. If you propose a cost-share or match to cover non-specialty

crop activities and costs, include the specific costs or contributions proposed to meet the cost-share or match, the source of funding or contributions, and describe how you determined the appropriate amount of cost-share or match. See [Section 3.8 Cost Sharing and Matching](#) for guidance on documentation standards.

- If the project is a continuation of a project that the SCBGP funded previously, describe how the project differs from and builds on the previous project's efforts. Describe also the likelihood of the project becoming self-sustaining and not indefinitely dependent on grant funds. Specifically, provide a summary (3 to 5 sentences per project) of the accomplishments of the previous project that have led you to seek continued funding.
- Have you submitted the project to another Federal or State grant program other than the SCBGP for funding and/or is another Federal or State grant program other than the SCBGP funding the project currently?
 - If no, indicate that you have not.
 - If yes, identify the Federal and/or State grant program by name and describe how the new project differs from and supplements efforts of the SCBGP and the other Federal or State grant program rather than duplicates funding efforts. The SCBGP will not fund duplicative projects.

Potential Impact

This section must show how the project benefits the specialty crop industry and/or the public or multiple states rather than only a particular commercial product, single organization, institution, or individual and must address the following:

- Who are the specialty crop beneficiaries of the project?
- How many specialty crop beneficiaries will the project benefit?
- How will the project benefit the specialty crop beneficiaries?
- What is the potential economic impact of the project if it can be estimated?
- If applicable, how will the project have a multi-state (benefitting two more or states) or national impact?

Expected Measureable Outcomes

Provide at least one distinct, quantifiable, measurable project outcome that solely supports enhancing the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops. If the outcome measures are long-term and occur after the project's completion, then identify an intermediate outcome that occurs before the end of the grant period and that is expected to help lead to the fulfillment of long-term outcomes. For further information on expected measurable outcomes, please see the [Outcomes Model](#) or this [Educational Bulletin](#). This section must address the following:

- Provide a GOAL - A goal is what you hope to achieve as a result of conducting the activities and producing the outputs (tangible results that can be seen, touched, handled, or moved about) of the project. Examples of outcome-oriented goals could include a change in knowledge, change in behavior, change in conditions that make a difference for the beneficiaries of the project.
- Provide a PERFORMANCE MEASURE - Identify a performance measure for each goal that you will use to measure the actual project results compared to the expected results. These are usually expressed in quantifiable terms and should be objective and measurable (numeric values, percentages, scores and indices, although in certain circumstances qualitative measures are appropriate).

- Provide a BENCHMARK - For each performance measure provided, include benchmark. The benchmark is the baseline data against which you will measure your success. Examples of a benchmark could include current or initial level of knowledge, current behavior, or current conditions.
- Provide a TARGET - For each benchmark provided, indicate the TARGET. The TARGET is the level of change that you anticipate by the completion of the project. This is NOT the target audience or target population.
- Provide your PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN - How will you monitor your progress toward achieving each GOAL?
 - What are your data sources for monitoring performance? For example, will you conduct surveys or use questionnaires?
 - How will you collect the required data? Be sure to include the frequency of your data collection.
- Describe how you will share the results of the project with specialty crop growers and other interested specialty crop stakeholders.

Work Plan

- Project activity. Describe the project activities that are necessary to accomplish the objectives. Make sure you include your performance monitoring/data collection plan activities.
- Who will do the work? Indicate the project participants who will do the work of each activity, including subrecipients, and/or contractors. If you request grant funds for personnel and contractors, you must include them in the work plan to demonstrate the requested funding is warranted. If you request funds for travel, these activities must also be included.
- When will each activity be accomplished? Include a timeline that indicates when each activity will occur (at least month and year) and beginning and end dates for the project. Make sure the work plan timeline shows that the project will be completed within the allowable grant period.

Project Commitment

Describe the specialty crop stakeholders other than the applicant, individuals and organizations involved in the project who support this project and why.

Budget Narrative

All expenses described in the Budget Narrative must be associated with expenses that will be covered by the SCBGP. If a match is required by the State department of agriculture, expenses to be covered with matching funds must be described separately. Applicants should review [Section 4.6 Funding Restrictions](#) prior to developing their budget narrative.

Personnel

List the organization's employees whose time and effort can be specifically identified and easily and accurately traced to project activities that solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. See [Salaries and Wages](#) for Allowable Costs and Activities and [Presenting Direct and Indirect Costs Consistently](#) for further guidance.

For each employee paid with SCBGP grant funds, provide the following:

- Name and title
- Level of effort (number of hours or % FTE)
- Total funds requested for each employee

- Include a subtotal for all SCBGP-funded Personnel costs

Fringe Benefits

Provide the fringe benefit rates for each of the project's salaried employees described in the Personnel section that will be paid with SCBGP funds. This section must include the following:

- Name and title
- Fringe benefit rate
- Corresponding funds requested for each person
- A subtotal for all SCBGP-funded fringe benefit costs.

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 and subsistence rates prescribed in those regulations. This information is available at <http://www.gsa.gov>. See [Travel](#) and [Foreign Travel](#) for further guidance.

Please provide the following information for each trip:

- Trip destination
- Purpose of trip
- Type of expense (airfare, car rental, hotel, meals, mileage, etc.)
- Number of days traveling
- Estimated number of miles and mileage rate
- Estimated ground transportation costs
- Estimated lodging and meal costs
- Number of travelers claiming expense
- Total funds requested for each expense
- Provide additional justification of travel expenses, as needed
- Include a subtotal for all SCBGP-funded travel costs

Special Purpose 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. "Acquisition cost" means the cost of the asset, whether funded wholly or in part by SCBGP, including the cost to put it in place. See [Equipment - Special Purpose](#) for allowable costs and activities.

Rental of "general purpose equipment" must also be described in this section. Purchase of general purpose equipment is not allowable under this grant. See [Equipment - General Purpose](#) for definition and [Rental or Lease Costs of Buildings, Vehicles, Land and Equipment](#).

This section must include the following:

- Description of equipment item
- Justification for each item
- Indicate if each item is rented or purchased
- Total funds requested for each item.
- Include a subtotal for all SCBGP-funded equipment costs.

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 solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. See [Supplies and Materials, Including Costs of Computing Devices](#) for further information.

This section must include the following:

- Description of each supply item
- Justification for each item
- Per-unit cost of each supply
- Number of units/pieces purchased
- Total funds requested for each supply
- Include a subtotal for all SCBGP-funded supply costs

Contractual/Consultants

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

- If the contractor/consultant has already been selected, please verify that the State applicant followed the same policies and procedures it uses for procurements from its non-federal sources. For all non-State applicants, please verify that the applicant used its own procurement procedures which reflect applicable State and local laws and regulations and conform to the Federal laws and standards identified in [7 CFR Part 3019.40 through 48](#) or [3016.36](#), as applicable.
- If a contractor/consultant has not yet been selected, provide an acknowledgement that the procurement processes have not yet been conducted and an assurance that the State applicant will follow the same policies and procedures it uses for procurements from its non-federal sources. For all non-State applicants, provide an acknowledgement that the procurement processes have not yet been conducted, and an assurance that the applicant will use its own procurement procedures which reflect applicable State and local laws and regulations and conform to the Federal law and standards identified in [7 CFR Part 3019.40 through 48](#) or [3016.36](#), as applicable.

- Provide an itemized budget (personnel, fringe, travel, equipment, supplies, other, etc.) with appropriate justification. If indirect costs are/will be included in the contract, include the indirect cost rate used. Please note that any statutory limitations on indirect costs also apply to contractors and consultants.
- 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/#url=2014>), provide a justification for the expenses. This limit does not include fringe benefits, travel, indirect costs, or other expenses. See [Contractual/Consultant Costs](#) for acceptable justifications.
- Include a subtotal for all SCBGP-funded contractual/consultant costs

Other

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

If you budget meal costs for reasons other than meals associated with travel per diem, provide an adequate justification to support that these costs are not entertainment costs. See [Meals](#) for further guidance.

This section must include the following:

- A description of the item
- Justification for the expense
- Per-unit cost of each item
- Number of units
- Total funds requested for each item
- Include a subtotal for all SCBGP-funded other costs

Indirect Charges

The indirect cost rate must not exceed the rate established by the State department of agriculture and cannot exceed the limit of 8 percent of the project's budget (see [Limit on Administration Costs](#) for further information). Indirect costs are any costs that are incurred for common or joint objectives that therefore, 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 [Presenting Direct and Indirect Costs Consistently](#) for further guidance.

This section must include the following:

- The indirect cost rate
- The total indirect costs requested

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.

This section must include the following:

- Source/nature of program income
- Description of how you will reinvest the program income back into the project or program to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops
- The estimated amount of program income

4.3 SUBMISSION DATE AND TIME

State department of agriculture applicants must submit applications via www.Grants.gov by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on July 9, 2014. AMS SCBGP will not consider applications received after this deadline for funding.

4.4 INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

This initiative is not subject to [intergovernmental review](#).

4.5 FUNDS NOT APPLIED FOR

State department of agriculture eligible applicants who do not apply for or do not request all available funding during the specified grant application period will forfeit all or that portion of available funding not requested. AMS SCBGP will allocate funds not applied for, by a date as determined by AMS SCBGP, pro rata to the remaining State department of agriculture applicants who applied during the specified grant application period.

4.6 FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

4.6.1 LIMIT ON ADMINISTRATION COSTS

Administration costs are defined as indirect costs and are limited to 8 percent of the total Federal funds provided under the award per [section 10010\(4\) of the Agricultural Act of 2014, Public Law 113-79](#). The State department of agriculture must notify their sub-applicants of the limit on indirect costs in their requests for proposals/applications so that indirect costs requested by sub-applicants plus indirect administration costs requested by the State department of agriculture do not exceed 8 percent of the state's grant request. Indirect costs charged to any individual project must not exceed 8 percent of that project's budget. See the information below on presenting direct and indirect costs consistently.

Presenting Direct and Indirect Costs Consistently

Applicants and sub-applicants are responsible for presenting costs incurred for the same purpose in like circumstances consistently and must not include costs associated with their organization's indirect cost rate agreement as direct costs. In addition, a cost may not be allocated as an indirect cost if it is also incurred as a direct cost for the same purpose and vice versa. For further information on how to determine if a cost is indirect or direct, please see the "[Indirect Cost Decision Tree](#)."

Direct costs are costs that can be identified specifically with a particular award, project or program, service, or other organizational activity or that can be directly assigned to such an activity relatively easily with a high degree of accuracy. Typically direct costs include, but are not limited to, compensation of

employees who work directly on the award to include salaries and fringe benefits, travel, equipment, and supplies directly benefiting the grant-supported project or program.

Indirect costs (also known as “facilities and administrative costs”) are costs incurred for common or joint objectives that cannot be identified specifically with a particular project, program, or organizational activity. The table below includes typical indirect costs for specific types of organizations.

The salaries of administrative and clerical staff should normally be treated as indirect costs. Direct charging of these costs may be appropriate where all of the following conditions are met:

- (1) administrative or clerical services are integral to a project or activity;
- (2) individuals involved can be specifically identified with the project or activity;
- (3) such costs are explicitly included in the budget or have the prior written approval of the Federal awarding agency; and
- (4) the costs are not also recovered as indirect costs.

Typical Indirect Costs by Organization Type

Type of Organization	Typical Indirect Costs
Non-Profits	General administration and general expenses, such as the salaries and expenses of executive officers, personnel administration, and accounting, depreciation or use allowances on buildings and equipment, and the costs of operating and maintaining facilities.
Colleges and Universities	Equipment and capital improvements, operation and maintenance expenses, library expenses, general administration and general expenses, departmental administration, sponsored projects administration, student administration and services, depreciation and use allowances, and interest on debt associated with certain buildings.
State and Local Governments	State/local-wide central service costs, general administration of the recipient department or agency, accounting and personnel services performed within the recipient department or agency, depreciation or use allowances on buildings and equipment, and the costs of operating and maintaining facilities.

4.6.2 ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE COSTS AND ACTIVITIES

All SCBGP awards are subject to the terms and conditions, *USDA Administrative Regulations*, *Federal Cost Principles*, and other considerations described in the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program [General Terms and Conditions of Award](#).

All costs must be allowable in accordance with the applicable Federal cost principles

- State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments – [2 CFR part 225](#)
- Colleges and Universities – [2 CFR part 220](#)
- Non-Profits – [2 CFR part 230](#)
- For Profits – [48 CFR part 31.2](#)

The following list describes specific funding restrictions under the AMS SCBGP. This section is not intended to be all-inclusive. The applicant should consult the Federal cost principles for the applicable organization for the complete explanation of the allowability of costs they address. State department of agriculture applicants that have questions concerning the allowability of costs after reviewing the associated Federal cost principles should contact the AMS SCBGP.

Item	Description
Advertising and Public Relations	<i>Allowable</i> if the primary purpose is to promote the sale of an eligible specialty crop by either stimulating interest in a particular specialty crop or disseminating technical information or messages for the purpose of increasing market share for the specialty crops.
Advertising and Public Relations – Promotion of an organization’s image, logo, or brand name	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for advertising and public relations costs designed solely to promote the image of an organization, general logo, or general brand rather than eligible specialty crops.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A promotional campaign to increase sales of “XYZ Grown” Watermelon is acceptable while increasing brand awareness of “XYZ Grown” generically is not. • Promoting tomatoes while including an organization’s logo in the promotion is acceptable, while generally promoting an organization’s logo is not. • Promotional items could say “Buy XYZ Grown Apples” but not “XYZ Grown”, which promotes XYZ generically. • A promotional campaign to increase producer sales of “XYZ Grown fruits and vegetables” is acceptable while increasing membership in “XYZ Grown” generically is not.
Advertising and Public Relations – Promotion of non-specialty crop activities	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for advertising and public relations costs for promotion at non-specialty crop specific venues, tradeshow, events, meetings, programs, conventions, symposia, seminars, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertisements could say “Buy Sweet Corn! It is the Best!” but not “Buy Local!” • Advertising educational sessions at a conference that solely benefits specialty crop growers are acceptable, while advertising a non-specialty crop specific local food conference is not.
Advertising and Public Relations – Promotional items	<p><i>Allowable</i> for promotional items that solely promote specialty crops rather than a single organization, general brand, or general logo. Distribution of any promotional item must not be contingent upon the consumer, or other target audience, purchasing a good or service to receive the promotional item.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional items could say “Buy XYZ Grown Apples” but not “XYZ Grown.”
Advertising and Public Relations – Gifts, prizes, etc.	<i>Unallowable</i> for gifts, prizes, memorabilia, and souvenirs.

Item	Description
Advertising and Public Relations – Sponsorships	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for costs associated with sponsorships. A sponsorship is a form of advertising in which an organization uses grant funds to have its name and/or logo associated with certain events and where the organization does not necessarily know how the funds associated with sponsorship costs will be used. These costs are considered a contribution or donation and only benefit the organization offering funding. This limits the beneficiaries to the sponsor organization, which conflicts with the restriction that projects affect and produce measurable outcomes for the specialty crop industry and/or the public rather than a single organization, institution, or individual.</p>
Advertising and Public Relations – Coupons, Incentives or Other Price Discounts	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for costs of coupon/incentive redemptions or price discounts. Costs associated with printing, distribution, or promotion of coupons/tokens or price discounts (i.e., a print advertisement that contains a clip-out coupon) are <i>allowable</i> only if they solely promote the specialty crop rather than promote or benefit a program or single organization.</p> <p>See also Participant Support Costs.</p>
Advertising and Public Relations – Use of meeting rooms, space, exhibits for non-specialty crop activities	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for costs associated with the use of trade shows, meeting rooms, displays, demonstrations, exhibits, and the rental of space for activities that do not solely promote specialty crops.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the participation of raspberry and blueberry producers at a non-specialty crop specific international trade show to promote berries to an international audience is allowable, while renting a booth space for berry producers as well as wheat producers at an international trade show is not allowable. • Supporting the participation of farmers’ market managers at a national conference that is not specific to specialty crops is not allowable. • Supporting a portion of a national conference that is not specific to specialty crops is not allowable, while supporting a session on specialty crops at a national conference that is not specific to specialty crops is allowable. • Funding an “XYZ State Grown” booth at a specialty crop-specific venue where all exhibitors in the booth are specialty crop producers is allowable, but funding an “XYZ Grown” booth at a non-specialty crop specific venue is not allowable.
Advertising and Public Relations – Cookbooks, Cooking Demonstrations, Recipe Cards, Food Pairings	<p><i>Allowable</i> for costs promoting the specialty crops in processed products (products prepared or created for the purposes of promoting a specialty crop but that require other ingredients are considered a processed product). A processed product is defined as a product that constitutes greater than 50% of the specialty crop by weight, exclusive of added water.</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> for costs of separate complementary non-specialty crop products. A</p>

Item	Description
	<p>separate complementary non-specialty crop product means a product closely associated with a specialty crop product, the purchase of one encouraging consumers to buy the other (i.e., cheese and wine).</p>
Alcoholic Beverages	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for alcoholic beverages except when the costs are associated with enhancing the competitiveness of a processed product as defined above.</p>
Aquaponics	<p><i>Allowable</i> as long as the crops that are being grown are eligible specialty crops and the focus of the project is on the specialty crops and not the fish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project to determine whether carp, catfish, or tilapia are best for growing lettuce is acceptable. • A project to study whether lettuce or tomato produced the highest yield of tilapia is not acceptable. • A project to farm fish using an aquaponics system and then sell the fish is not acceptable. • A project to grow specialty crops where both the specialty crops and the fish are sold is not acceptable. <p>For more information on constructing or purchasing an aquaponics system, see Equipment-General Purpose and Equipment – Special Purpose.</p>
Conferences	<p><i>Allowable</i> for costs of conferences. A conference is defined as a meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium, workshop or event whose primary purpose is the dissemination of technical information beyond the non-Federal recipient or subrecipient and is necessary and reasonable for successful performance under the Federal award. Allowable conference costs paid by the non-Federal recipient or subrecipient as a sponsor or host of the conference may include rental of facilities, speakers’ fees, costs of meals (see Meals for restrictions), and refreshments, local transportation, and other items incidental to such conferences with the exception of entertainment costs that are unallowable. If registration fees are collected, the recipient or subrecipient must report fees as program income (See Program Income).</p> <p>The AMS SCBGP encourages the use of technologies such as webinars, teleconferencing, or videoconferencing as an alternative to renting a building or a room.</p>
Construction and Renovation and Land or Building Acquisition	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for the acquisition of buildings, facilities, or land or to make additions, improvements, modifications, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallations, renovations or alterations of an existing building or facility (including site grading and improvement, and architecture fees).</p> <p>Building means any permanent structure that is designed or intended for support, enclosure, shelter or protection of person, animals or property having a permanent roof that is supported by columns or walls.</p>

Item	Description
Contractual/Consultant Costs (Professional Services)	<p><i>Allowable subject to limitations below.</i> 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.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for contractor/consultant employee rates that do not 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/2014/general-schedule/). This does not include fringe benefits, travel, indirect costs, or other expenses. Please note that any statutory limitations on indirect costs also apply to contractors and consultants.</p> <p>If rates exceed this amount, one of the following justifications must be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the steps you took to hire a contractor, which includes obtaining a cost/price analysis. The purpose of the analysis is to review and evaluate each element of cost to determine reasonableness, allocability, and allowability. <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the complexity or uniqueness of the project, the pool of available and qualified contractors is limited. Therefore, the selected contractor's specialized qualifications necessitate hiring at a rate beyond a GS-15 step 10. (Please outline the unique qualifications of the contractor.)
Contributions and Donations	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for contributions or donations, including cash, property, and services, from the recipient or subrecipient to other entities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A non-profit entity using grant funds to purchase produce to donate to other entities and individuals is unallowable.
Entertainment	<p><i>Unallowable.</i> Entertainment costs include amusement, diversion, and social activities and any costs directly associated with such costs (such as bands, orchestras, dance groups, tickets to shows, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, and gratuities).</p>
Equipment – General Purpose	<p><i>Unallowable for purchase costs but allowable for rental costs.</i> “General purpose equipment” is tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds \$5,000, and is used for other than research, scientific or other technical activities. Acquisition cost means 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. Examples include office equipment and furnishings, modular offices, telephone networks, information technology equipment and systems, tractors, reproduction and printing equipment, and motor vehicles.</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> for purchase, even if the SCBGP share is less than \$5,000 of the general purpose equipment that costs \$5,000 or more.</p>

Item	Description
	For policies governing the allowability of costs for rental of equipment, see Rental or Lease Costs of Buildings, Vehicles, Land, and Equipment in this table.
Equipment – Special Purpose	<p><i>Allowable</i> with conditions.</p> <p>“Special purpose equipment” is tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds \$5,000, and is used only for research, scientific, or other technical activities. Acquisition cost means 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 taxes, duty, protective in transit insurance, freight, and installation may be included in or excluded from the acquisition cost in accordance with the non-Federal recipients’ or subrecipients’ regular accounting practices.</p> <p>Capital expenditures (expenditures to acquire, make additions, improvements, modifications, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallations, renovations, or alterations that materially increase the value or useful life) for special purpose equipment are allowable as direct costs, provided the following criteria is met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Necessary for the research, scientific, or other technical activities of the grant 2) Not otherwise reasonably available and accessible 3) The type of equipment is normally charged as a direct cost by the organization 4) Acquired in accordance with organizational practice 5) Must only be used to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops 6) The specialty crop industry, rather than a single commercial organization, commercial product, or individual, must benefit from the use of the equipment 7) Must not use special purpose equipment acquired with grant funds to provide services for a fee to compete unfairly with private companies that provide equivalent services 8) The subrecipient that acquired the equipment with SCBGP funds and the State department of agriculture awarding funds for the equipment must understand they are subject to the full range of acquisition, use, management, and disposition requirements of 7 CFR parts 3019.34 and 3019.35 or 7 CFR parts 3016.32 and 3016.33 as applicable. <p>Recipients and subrecipients purchasing any special purpose equipment are encouraged to use such funds to purchase only American-made equipment or products.</p>
Foreign Travel	<p>For purposes of this provision, “foreign travel” includes any travel outside Canada, Mexico, the United States, and any United States territories and possessions. However, the term “foreign travel” for a governmental unit located in a foreign country means travel outside that country. An applicant with a proposal that involves foreign market</p>

Item	Description
	<p>development must determine if the project is more appropriate for grant programs administered by the Foreign Agricultural Service or funded through the State-Regional Trade Groups. AMS SCBGP recommends that applicants search the Foreign Agricultural Service database of GAIN reports (http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Pages/Default.aspx) to ensure that proposals will not duplicate information that already exists. Any proposal involving foreign travel must be well justified.</p> <p>See Travel in this table for more information on travel costs.</p>
Fundraising	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for organized fundraising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions, regardless of the purpose for which the funds will be used. This includes salaries of personnel involved in activities to raise capital.</p>
General Costs of Government	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Salaries and expenses of the Office of the Governor of a State or the chief executive of a political subdivision or the chief executive of federally-recognized Indian tribal government; 2) Salaries and other expenses of a State legislature, tribal council, or similar local governmental body, such as a county supervisor, city council, school board, etc., whether incurred for purposes of legislation or executive direction; 3) Costs of the judicial branch of a government; 4) Costs of prosecutorial activities; and 5) Costs of other general types of government services normally provided to the general public, such as fire and police.
Goods or Services for Personal Use	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for costs of goods or services for personal use of the recipient's or subrecipient's employees regardless of whether the cost is reported as taxable income to the employees.</p>
Health and Nutrition Messaging	<p><i>Allowable</i> when health and nutrition information complies with regulations and policies of the:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Federal Trade Commission</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">http://www.ftc.gov/about-ftc/bureaus-offices/bureau-consumer-protection</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>U.S. Food and Drug Administration</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">http://www.fda.gov/Food/IngredientsPackagingLabeling/LabelingNutrition/default.htm.</p> <p>Nutrition and health claims must be truthful, not misleading or deceptive, and include</p>

Item	Description
	adequate disclaimers if appropriate.
Information Technology Systems	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for information technology systems having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established in accordance by generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) by the non-Federal recipient or subrecipient for financial statement purposes or \$5,000. Acquisition cost means the cost of the asset including the cost to ready the asset for its intended use. Acquisition costs for software includes those development costs capitalized in accordance with GAAP.</p> <p>Information technology systems include computing devices, ancillary equipment, software, firmware, and similar procedures, services (including support services), and related resources. Computing devices means machines used to acquire, store, analyze, process, and publish data and other information electronically, including accessories (or “peripherals”) for printing, transmitting and receiving, or storing electronic information. Examples of unallowable information technology systems include service contracts, operating systems, printers, and computers that have an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for website development, mobile apps, etc.</p>
Lobbying	<p>The recipient should obtain an advance understanding with the AMS SCBGP if it intends to engage in certain activities intended to influence Federal, State or local government entities.</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> for:</p> <p>(1) Attempts to influence the outcomes of any Federal, State, or local election, referendum, initiative, or similar procedure, through in kind or cash contributions, endorsements, publicity, or similar activity;</p> <p>(2) Establishing, administering, contributing to, or paying the expenses of a political party, campaign, political action committee, or other organization established for the purpose of influencing the outcomes of elections;</p> <p>(3) Any attempt to influence:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a) the introduction of Federal or State legislation; or</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">b) the enactment or modification of any pending Federal or State legislation through:</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">i) communication with any member or employee of the Congress or State legislature, including efforts to influence State or local officials to engage in similar lobbying activity; or</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">ii) by preparing, distributing, or using publicity or propaganda, or by urging members of the general public, or any segment thereof, to</p>

Item	Description
	<p>contribute to or participate in any mass demonstration, march, rally, fund raising drive, lobbying campaign or letter writing or telephone campaign; or</p> <p>c) any government official or employee in connection with a decision to sign or veto enrolled legislation;</p> <p>(4) Legislative liaison activities, including attendance at legislative sessions or committee hearings, gathering information regarding legislation, and analyzing the effect of legislation, when such activities are carried on in support of or in knowing preparation for an effort to engage in unallowable lobbying; and</p> <p>(5) Costs incurred in attempting to improperly influence, either directly or indirectly, an employee or officer of the Executive branch of the Federal Government to give consideration to or act regarding a regulatory, agreement, or contract matter.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> activities directly related to the performance of a grant include:</p> <p>(1) Providing a technical and factual presentation of information on a topic directly related to the performance of a grant, contract or other agreement through hearing testimony, statements or letters to the Congress or a State legislature, or subdivision, member, or cognizant staff member provided:</p> <p>a) The presentation is in response to a documented request (including a Congressional Record notice requesting testimony or statements for the record at a regularly scheduled hearing) made by the recipient member, legislative body or subdivision, or a cognizant staff member; and</p> <p>b) The information for the presentation is readily obtainable and able to be put in deliverable form; and</p> <p>c) The costs for travel, lodging or meals are unallowable unless incurred to offer testimony at a regularly scheduled Congressional hearing pursuant to a written request for such presentation made by the Chairman or Ranking Minority Member of the Committee or Subcommittee conducting such hearing.</p> <p>2) Any activity conducted to influence State or local legislation in order to directly reduce the cost; or to avoid material impairment of the grant recipient's authority to perform the grant, contract, or agreement.</p> <p>3) Any activity excepted from the definitions of "lobbying" or "influencing legislation" by the Internal Revenue Code provisions that require nonprofit organizations to limit their participation in direct and "grass roots" lobbying activities in order to retain their charitable deduction status and avoid punitive excise taxes, I.R.C. §§ 501(c)(3), 501(h), 4911(a), including:</p> <p>a) Nonpartisan analysis, study, or research reports;</p>

Item	Description
	<p>b) Examinations and discussions of broad social, economic, and similar problems; and</p> <p>c) Information provided upon request by a legislator for technical advice and assistance, as defined by I.R.C. § 4911(d)(2) and 26 CFR 56.4911-2(c)(1)-(c)(3).</p>
<p>Meals</p>	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for business meals when individuals decide to go to lunch or dinner together when no need exists for continuity of a meeting. Such activity is considered an entertainment cost.</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> for breakfasts for conference attendees because it is expected these individuals will have sufficient time to obtain this meal on their own before the conference begins in the morning.</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> for meal costs that are duplicated in meeting participant's per diem or subsistence allowances.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for lunch or dinner meals if the costs are reasonable and a justification is provided that such activity maintains the continuity of the meeting and to do otherwise will impose arduous conditions on the meeting participants.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for meals consumed while in official travel status. They are considered per diem expenses and should be reimbursed in accordance with the organization's established written travel policies.</p>
<p>Participant Support Costs</p>	<p><i>Allowable</i> for such items as stipends or subsistence allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with approved conferences, training projects, and focus groups.</p> <p>See also Advertising and Public Relations - Coupons, Incentives or Other Price Discounts.</p>
<p>Political Activities</p>	<p><i>Unallowable</i> for development or participation in political activities in accordance with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. 1501-1508 and 7324-7326).</p>
<p>Pre-Award (Pre-Agreement Costs)</p>	<p><i>Allowable</i>, if such costs are necessary to conduct the project or program, and would be allowable under the grant, if awarded.</p> <p>A recipient may incur pre-award costs without prior approval from AMS SCBGP at its own risk. The incurrence of pre-award costs in anticipation of an award imposes no obligation on the AMS SCBGP to award funds for such costs.</p>
<p>Rental or Lease Costs of Buildings, Vehicles, Land, and Equipment</p>	<p><i>Allowable</i> to the extent that the rates are reasonable in light of such factors as: rental costs of comparable property, vehicle, land or equipment, if any; market conditions in the area; alternatives available; and the type, life expectancy, condition, and value of the property, vehicle, land or equipment leased. The recipient or subrecipient should review rental arrangements periodically to determine if circumstances have changed and other options are available.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for rental costs under leases that create a material equity in the leased</p>

Item	Description
	<p>property, as defined in the applicable cost principles, only up to the amount that would be allowed had the recipient or subrecipient purchased the property on the date the lease agreement was executed. This would include depreciation or use allowances, maintenance, taxes, and insurance, but would exclude unallowable costs.</p> <p>When a recipient or subrecipient transfers property to a third party through sale, lease, or otherwise and then leases the property back from that third party, the lease costs that may be charged to a SCBGP grant generally may not exceed the amount that would be allowed if the recipient or subrecipient continued to own the property.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> for rental costs under “less-than-arms-length” leases only up to the amount that would be allowed under the applicable cost principles had title to the property been vested in the recipient or subrecipient. A less-than-arms-length lease is one in which one party to the lease agreement is able to control or substantially influence the actions of the other. Such leases include, but are not limited to, those between divisions of an organization; between organizations under common control through common officers, directors, or members; and between an organization and its directors, trustees, officers, or key employees (or the families of these individuals), directly or through corporations, trusts, or similar arrangements in which they hold a controlling interest.</p>
<p>Salaries and Wages</p>	<p><i>Allowable</i> as part of employee compensation for personnel services in proportion to the amount of time or effort an employee devotes to the grant-supported project or program during the period of performance under the Federal award, including salaries, wages, and fringe benefits. Such costs must be incurred under formally established policies of the organization, be consistently applied, be reasonable for the services rendered, and be supported with adequate documentation.</p> <p>Salary and wage amounts charged to grant-supported projects or programs for personal services must be based on an adequate payroll distribution system that documents such distribution in accordance with generally accepted practices of like organizations. Standards for payroll distribution systems are contained in the applicable cost principles (other than those for for-profit organizations).</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> for salaries, wages and fringe benefits for project staff that devote time and effort to non-specialty crop specific venues, tradeshow, events, meetings, programs, conventions, symposia, seminars, etc. where costs cannot be specifically identified and easily and accurately traced to activities that solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: Salaries and wages for a farmers’ market manager to manage and advertise a farmers market that includes non-specialty crop items is unallowable, while salaries and wages for personnel to conduct a cooking demonstration on how to prepare fruits and vegetables is allowable.
<p>Supplies and Materials, Including Costs of</p>	<p><i>Allowable</i> for costs incurred for materials, supplies, and fabricated parts necessary to carry out a Federal award. Purchased materials and supplies must be charged at their</p>

Item	Description
Computing Devices	<p>actual prices, net of applicable credits. Withdrawals from general stores or stockrooms should be charged at their actual net cost under any recognized method of pricing inventory withdrawals, consistently applied. Incoming transportation charges are a proper part of materials and supplies costs. Only materials and supplies actually used for the performance of a Federal award may be charged as direct costs.</p> <p>A computing device is a supply if the acquisition cost is less than the lesser of the capitalization level established by the recipient or subrecipient for financial statement purposes or \$5,000, regardless of the length of its useful life. In the specific case of computing devices, charging as direct cost is allowable for devices that are essential and allocable, but not solely dedicated, to the performance of a Federal award. Where federally-donated or furnished materials are used in performing the Federal award, such materials will be used without charge.</p>
Training	<p><i>Allowable</i> for the State department of agriculture recipient when training is directly related to Federal grants management in proportion to the amount of time and effort expended by the trainee on the grant program.</p> <p><i>Allowable</i> when the training is required to meet the objectives of the project or program.</p>
Travel	<p><i>Allowable</i> when travel costs are limited to those allowed by formal organizational policy; in the case of air travel, the lowest reasonable commercial airfares must be used. See General Costs of Government for restrictions on travel for government officials.</p> <p>Recipients and subrecipients that do not have formal travel policies and for-profit subrecipients' allowable travel costs may not exceed those established by the Federal Travel Regulation, issued by GSA, including the maximum per diem and subsistence rates prescribed in those regulations. This information is available at http://www.gsa.gov. If a recipient or subrecipient organization has no formal travel policy, those regulations will be used to determine the amount that may be charged for travel costs.</p> <p>Recipients and subrecipients are strongly encouraged to take advantage of discount fares for airline travel through advance purchase of tickets if travel schedules can be planned in advance.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the use of alternative technologies such as teleconferencing or videoconferencing if they are available, appropriate for the project, and less costly.</p> <p><i>Unallowable</i> for travel costs for conferences, venues, tradeshow, events, meetings, programs, conventions, symposia, workshops seminars, etc. that include non-specialty crop activities such as farmers' market annual conferences and general marketing tradeshow where these costs cannot be specifically identified and easily and accurately traced to activities that solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: Travel costs for personnel to travel to a farmers' market conference

Item	Description
	is unallowable, while travel to a vegetable food safety educational session is allowable.

4.7 OTHER SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

AMS SCBGP requires State department of agriculture applicants to submit SCBGP applications electronically through the central Federal grants website, www.grants.gov instead of mailing hard copy documents. When applying through www.grants.gov, applicants are not required to submit any paper documents to AMS. Applicants should familiarize themselves with the Federal grants website and begin the application process well in advance of the application deadline (between 3 and 6 months). The AMS SCBGP will send an e-mail confirmation to the applicant upon receipt of the application. Applicants who do not receive an acknowledgement within 5 days of the submission deadline should notify the program contact.

For information on how to apply electronically, please consult the Grants.gov [Get Registered](#) webpage. Applicants experiencing problems in electronic preparation or submission of documentation should contact www.grants.gov, the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726, or visit their [Troubleshooting Tips](#) webpage for troubleshooting tips. The hours of operation are Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., Eastern Time; and they are closed on Federal Holidays.

When submitting through www.grants.gov, please use only the following UTF-8 characters when naming your attachments: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore (_), hyphen (-), space, period and limit the file name to 50 or fewer characters. Attachments that do not follow this rule may cause the entire application to be rejected or cause issues during processing.

5.0 APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

AMS SCBGP will review grant applications to ensure the State Plan meets the statutory purpose of the program, all application criteria are fulfilled in accordance with [4.0 Application and Submission Information](#), and that costs are allowable. If applicants request to extend funding for previously funded projects, AMS SCBGP will review expected measurable outcomes from the previously funded projects to ensure they ultimately led the applicant organization and/or project beneficiaries to continued improvement, effectiveness, and success.

The AMS SCBGP office will notify the individual listed on the SF-424 “Application for Federal Assistance” in block f. “Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application” if additional information is required after the initial review of the application. The State department of agriculture applicant should ensure that all sub-applicants are aware that additional information may be required from them because of the AMS SCBGP review of their grant proposal. Failure to provide requested information in a timely manner may result in a project not receiving funding.

The individual listed on the SF-424 is responsible for adequately addressing all application comments and questions from the AMS SCBGP prior to sending the AMS SCBGP the revised application. This individual should review the answers and follow up with the sub-applicant if more information is required prior to submitting the revised State Plan to the AMS SCBGP. This will help facilitate the approval of the application and reduce the number of revisions.

6.0 AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

6.1 AWARD NOTICES

Once all administrative and programmatic issues have been resolved, the AMS SCBGP will provide the State department of agriculture applicant with a formal notification in the form of an electronic Grant Agreement.

The Grant Agreement shows the amount of Federal funds authorized for obligation for the approved period of performance. Until the SCBGP has issued a signed Grant Agreement, the State department of agriculture applicant incurs any pre-award costs at its own risk.

The Grant Agreement sets forth pertinent information about the grant, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Federal Agreement Identification Number (FAIN) or “agreement number;”
- Statutory authority for the award and any applicable program regulations;
- Name of recipient organization;
- Name of the Recipient Project Coordinator;
- Approved period of performance start and end dates;
- Amount of Federal funds authorized for obligation by the recipient;
- Name of the Federal Agency Project Manager; and
- Applicable terms and conditions of award, by either reference or inclusion.

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.

6.2 ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

6.2.1 USDA ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to USDA Administrative requirements and Cost Principles of 7 CFR parts [3015](#), [3016](#) (Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State, Local, and Tribal Governments), and [3019](#) (Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations) and the [SCBGP General Award Terms and Conditions](#). An application funded with the release of Federal funds through a grant award does not constitute, or imply, compliance with Federal regulations. Grant recipients and subrecipients are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable Federal regulations.

6.2.2 DATA UNIVERSAL NUMBER SYSTEM (DUNS) NUMBER

The State department of agriculture must ensure that it and its sub-applicants, with the exception of individuals, have a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number at the time of application. A DUNS number is a unique number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. (D&B) to identify organizations. A DUNS number is required for every application. Potential applicants and sub-applicants may acquire a DUNS number at no cost online at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. To acquire a DUNS number by phone, contact the D&B Government Customer Response Center:

U.S. and U.S. Virgin Islands: 1-866-705-5711

Alaska and Puerto Rico: 1-800-234-3867 (Select option 2, then option 1)

Monday – Friday 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., CST

6.2.3 SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT

The System for Award Management (SAM) has replaced the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) as the central government repository for organizations working with the Federal government. To receive an award under the SCBGP, applicants are required to register with SAM and, in doing so, to designate an e-Business Point of Contact (e-Business POC). SAM registration must be updated annually and be active and maintained with current information at all times during which the State department of agriculture has an active award or an application under consideration.

The e-Business POC authorizes individuals to submit grant and cooperative agreement applications on behalf of the organization and creates a special password called a Marketing Partner ID Number (M-PIN) to verify individuals authorized to submit grant applications for the organization.

Organizations that need to register in SAM for the first time or need to update their SAM registration will visit <https://www.sam.gov/>. Questions about SAM may be directed to askSAM@gsa.gov.

6.2.4 SUBAWARD AND EXECUTIVE REPORTING

To comply with the Federal Funding and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA) and [2 CFR part 170, Reporting Subaward and Executive Compensation Information](#), State department of agriculture recipients must register with the FSRS database and report the required data on their first tier subrecipients. See [Appendix A to part 170 – Award Term](#) for Reporting Subawards and Executive Compensation requirements.

6.2.5 DEBARMENT AND SUSPENSION

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 for non-procurement programs and activities. “Non-procurement” transactions include, among other things, grant agreements. AMS SCBGP implements these regulations as a term and condition of award. State department of agriculture recipients must check the System for Award Management located at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/> prior to entering into a “lower-tier” transaction. “Lower tier” transactions include 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.

SAM is a centrally maintained government-wide database that includes the names of organizations and individuals that have been debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or been voluntarily excluded; the reasons for that status; and the duration of that status. You can search exclusion records on SAM at www.sam.gov to identify those parties excluded from receiving federal funds. The State department of agriculture must document the results of the search and must disclose unfavorable information to the AMS SCBGP before awarding funds. The AMS SCBGP will consider the information as part of the determination of whether the State department of agriculture may award funds to that particular sub-applicant.

6.2.6 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 indicate in their applications (on the [SF-424](#) “Application for Federal Assistance”) if they are delinquent on any Federal debt. If the

applicant discloses a delinquency, the AMS SCBGP 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 SCBGP 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. The Federal Agency will disallow costs charged to awards that provide funds to individuals in violation of this requirement.

6.3 ACCEPTANCE OF AN AWARD

A signature by an authorized representative of the State department of agriculture on the Grant Agreement constitutes acceptance of an award and its associated terms and conditions. The AMS SCBGP must receive a scanned or faxed copy of the signed Grant Agreement. If a recipient cannot accept the award, including the legal obligation to perform in accordance with award terms and conditions, the recipient should notify the Federal Agency Project Manager immediately upon receipt of the Grant Agreement. Once the recipient accepts the award, the contents of the Grant Agreement are binding on the recipient.

6.4 REPORTING

State department of agriculture recipients are required to submit annual performance reports within 90 calendar days after the award's anniversary date (i.e., one year following the month and day on which the grant agreement period of performance begins and each year thereafter up until a Final Performance Report is required).

The following reports are due within 90 days following the grant ending date:

- 1) Final Performance Report
- 2) Final Payment Request (SF-270), if applicable
- 3) Final SF-425, "Federal Financial Report" and if applicable, payment of unobligated balance
- 4) Audit Report, if applicable
- 5) Tangible Personal Property Report, if applicable

The grantee should submit the reports to AMS SCBGP electronically as required in the [SCBGP General Award Terms and Conditions](#).

7.0 AGENCY CONTACTS

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

7.1 SCBGP PROJECT MANAGER

Ms. Trista Etzig

Phone: (202) 690-4942

Email: Trista.Etzig@usda.gov

7.2 GRANTS MANAGEMENT SPECIALISTS

Mr. John Miklozek

Phone: (202) 720-1403

Email: John.Miklozek@usda.gov

Ms. Jenny Greer

Phone: (202) 205-3941
Email: Jenny.Greer@usda.gov

7.3 ADDRESS

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Stop 0269
Room 4534 South Building
Washington, DC 20250-0269
Fax: (202) 690-4152

8.0 OTHER INFORMATION

8.1 RELEASE OF APPLICATION INFORMATION

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) of 1966 ([5 U.S.C. 552](#)) and the Privacy Act of 1874 ([5 U.S.C. 552a](#)), as implemented by USDA's regulations ([7 CFR part 1, Subpart A](#)) govern the release or withholding of information to the public in connection with this award. The release of information under these laws and regulations applies only to records held by AMS and imposes no requirement on the State department of agriculture or any subrecipient to permit or deny public access to their records. You can direct requests for records or the release of information relating to this award to:

USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
FOIA/PA Officer
Room 3521-S
Ag Stop 0202
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250-0273

Telephone: (202) 720-2498
Fax: (202) 690-3767
E-mail: AMS.FOIA@usda.gov

8.2 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

The USDA prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to:

USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Stop 9410

Washington, DC 20250-9410

or call toll-free:

English: (866) 632-9992

TTD: (800) 877-8339

English Federal-relay: (866) 377-8642

Spanish Federal-relay: (800) 845-6136.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.