



Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Outreach

Best Practices for Reviewing Multi-State Projects

Multi-State projects present an opportunity to address complex issues both efficiently and comprehensively within the specialty crop industry. Situations that require a multi-state effort tend to be beyond the scope or reach of a single State department of agriculture. Therefore, it may not be feasible to align specialty crop goals, priorities, review criteria, etc. in order to ensure the selection of multi-state projects within each State department of agriculture's competitive review process. As such, it may be sensible for the States to consider the use of a non-competitive review process specifically for multi-state project proposals in order to encourage their development and submission.

This non-competitive peer review process, although not part of a State's competitive review, demonstrates that the proposed project is of the highest quality, is multi-state, meets stakeholder needs, and is consistent with

each State's goals. Accordingly, it is advisable to ensure that the reviewers are not associated with the project and that they are knowledgeable in the subject matter of the proposed project. Concerns that are identified during the review process should be addressed in subsequent revisions of the proposal in order to obtain approval.

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

1. The objectives are clearly focused
2. Each participant listed has direct involvement in the accomplishment of the stated objectives
3. The project is multi-state
4. The project proposal has been peer-reviewed
5. The proposed project is oriented toward accomplishment of specific outcomes and impacts and based on the priorities de-

veloped from stakeholder input

6. The proposal describes how the States are going to collaborate effectively within the project
7. Each state participating in the project submits the project in their State plan indicating which State is taking the coordinating role and the percent of the budget covered by each State



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Special points of interest:

- FY10 grant applications are due by July 29, 2010
- Applications must be received through www.grants.gov
- Please begin your [grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) registration process early!



Program Income Earned During Grant Period

What is program income?

According to 7 CFR 3015 - Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, "program income" means gross income earned by a recipient from activities supported by a grant or cooperative agreement. It includes but is not limited to income in the form of fees for services performed during the life of the grant, cooperative agreement, or subgrant, proceeds from sale of tangible personal or real property, usage or rental fees, and patent or copyright royalties.

Do I need to report program income?

If program income is earned by the State department of agriculture or a sub-grantee during the grant period, program income must be reported in the budget narrative. Indicate the nature or source of program income (for ex: registration fees), the estimated amount, and how the income will be used to further enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

How can program income be used?

If program income is earned it may be used for:

- 1) expanding the project or program;
- 2) continuing the project or program after the grant or sub grant support ends; and
- 3) supporting other projects or programs that further the broad objectives of the grant program.

Reducing the File Size of State Plans and Reports in PDF

As a follow-up to Winter 2010's article on how to reduce the size of images in Microsoft Word, we are providing guidance on shrinking the size of a PDF so that it can be successfully emailed. Specifically, Adobe Acrobat Professional maintains a few different ways to shrink a PDF's file size, which include reducing file size, printing, and optimizing. However, it should be noted that these mechanisms will likely strip out hyperlinks, programming, etc.

To reduce the file size, click on Document and then go to "Reduce File Size..." The Reduce File Size menu will pop up. You will be able to choose which Acrobat

reader this document should be compatible with. Once this is chosen, press "OK" and save the smaller file.

Another mechanism to reduce the file size is to print the PDF. (Believe me, it works!) Press the print button on the toolbar. A pop-up menu will appear which will allow you to choose a printer. Choose the "Adobe PDF" printer and then click on the "Properties" button. Another menu—titled "Adobe PDF Printer Properties"—will appear. Click on the "Adobe PDF Settings" tab and then select the "Smallest File Size" in the Default Settings dropdown list. Press "OK" in the "Adobe PDF Printer

Properties" menu and then press "OK" in the printer pop-up menu. Once you complete this, save the file to the appropriate location on your computer.

Finally, if the large document in question is a scanned PDF you can also have it optimized. To do this, go to the Document menu on the toolbar and then click on "Optimize Scanned PDF". A pop-up window will appear with a scale towards the top. Move the indicator toward "Small Size" on the left hand side of the menu and then press "OK". Once you have completed this, save the file to the appropriate location on your computer.

Benefit More Than One Commercial Product or Organization

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

Grant funds will not be awarded for projects that solely benefit a particular commercial product or provide a profit to a single organization, institution, or individual. Single organizations, institutions, and individuals are encouraged to

participate as project partners.

Does this mean if a project focuses only on apples (for example) that it's not applicable?

A -If a project solely benefits one commercial product such as "Smith Company Apples", then this project is unallowable.

If a project benefits a single commodity within the State such as apples or benefits an apple organization and its members, then this project is eligible.

