

# 2014 Specialty Crop Block Grant Newsletter!!

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Thirteen projects selected for 2014 Nevada Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP)!
- Next SCBGP application is anticipated to open January 2015.
- Nevada Small Farms Conference is scheduled for January 22-24 2015!

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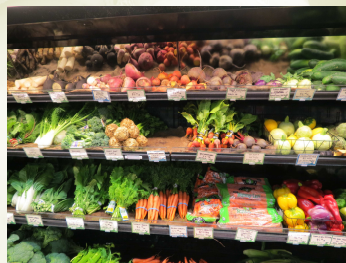
## WHAT ARE SPECIALTY CROPS?

fruits, vegetables, legumes, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture.

## 2014 AWARDS ANNOUNCED

On September 30, 2014 the Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) was awarded Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) funding to support thirteen projects! Awarded projects will work towards increasing specialty crop production, consumption, sales, and awareness throughout Nevada. The following projects have been selected:

### Great Basin Community



**Food Co-op (GBCFC)** will launch a *Meet Your Farmer App* that will connect consumers with their local specialty crop producers through placing a QR code on produce that can be scanned and linked to a video of the farm that grew the product. **Goals:** Heighten customer knowledge and appreciation while directly

increasing the sales of specialty crops in Nevada. GBCFC will be partnering with NDA in promoting the videos captured during the project. **Beneficiaries:** Nevada specialty crop farms' that will be conveying their story through video, consumers receiving information regarding where their produce comes from, and retailers that are interested in utilizing the QR codes for marketing local specialty crops.

**The Carson City Greenhouse Project** will implement



*Growing the Next Generation of Nevada's Specialty Crop Farmers* by developing a student-run CSA program in which students learn about growing vegetables, food safety procedures, marketing products and farm production business

skills. **Goals:** Increase student awareness of good agricultural practices and sustainable field production techniques for specialty crops through developing and managing a CSA. This experience will allow students to experience the challenges of distributing products from the school garden program to the community. This experience is intended to enhance student familiarity of specialty crop production careers. **Beneficiaries:** Nevada youth (participating in the project), CSA subscribers, and Nevada specialty crop consumers (increased access to Nevada specialty crops).



Carson City High School Green House

**Tea House Gardens** will implement the *Community Horticulture & Cider Making* project by identifying, restoring, and returning local heritage apple groves back into production. **Goals:** Offer volunteer horticultural services to heritage apple grove owners in exchange for a portion of the crop; recruit, manage, and train community volunteers to learn and practice horticultural restorative care of enrolled apple groves; and coordinate an annual community cider-making event that promotes the project and engages community members in making/sharing fresh cider. **Beneficiaries:** Participating heritage apple grove owners, volunteers obtaining knowledge/skills on fruit tree horti-

culture, and community members receiving education about fruit tree horticulture, and cider making.



**Nevada Department of Agriculture** will work to elevate the awareness of Nevada’s specialty crops online through the *Nevada Specialty Crop Social Media Video*

*Promotions* project. **Goals:** To expose at least 50,000 targeted consumers in Nevada’s largest metropolitan areas (Reno, Las Vegas) to the state’s specialty crop products by providing on-farm video advertisements/promotions featuring Nevada specialty crop producers, growers, and retailers. **Beneficiaries:** Featured specialty crop producers, consumers (increasing their knowledge regarding Nevada specialty crop growers), and participating retailers.

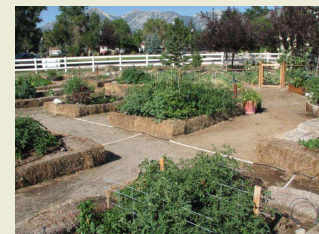


**Lazy P Adventure Farm** will perform *Pumpkin Variety Field Trials* as a collaborative group of specialty crop/agritourism farms in order to identify viable varieties of pumpkins and cultural practices that will prosper in Northern Nevada’s climate. **Goals:** Increase net income potential for Nevada pumpkin farmers by providing farmers data on high yield pumpkin varieties suitable for Nevada locations and to reduce crop failures on existing pumpkin farms. **Beneficiaries:** Northern Nevada pumpkin growers, consumers, and pumpkin related agritourism participants



**The Main Street Gardnerville Program Corporation** will oversee “*Growing to Share*” at *Heritage Park Gardens*, a community garden project that will allow families involved in the Getting Ahead Alliance or Douglas County Food Closet to learn about growing, harvesting, and preparing their own specialty crops, with support from local specialty crop producers. **Goals:** Increase nutritional knowledge by 25% through providing a nutritional workshop to participating families; improve knowledge regarding specialty crop growing techniques by 25% through providing

information/hands-on experience to participating families; expand food access to Douglas County’s underserved community; and increase awareness of locally available specialty crops in the local community. **Beneficiaries:** Participating families, Douglas County Community, and participating farmers.



**Heritage Park Gardens**

**University of Nevada Cooperative Extension**

will research *Cost Estimates and Implementation of Edible Horticultural Product Food Safety Practices in Nevada*.

This project will work towards quantifying the costs associated with implementing on-farm food safety practices and will provide cost effective on-farm strategies for enhancing food safety practices.

**Goals:** Increase knowledge regarding the costs to implement food safety practices on-farm and record keeping requirements associated with compliance; and expand the level of adoption of produce safety practices through outreach activities.

**Beneficiaries:** Nevada specialty crop growers interested in implementing food safety practices, and retailers and consumers as

they will have increased access to local products grown using food safety practices.

**University of Nevada’s High Desert Farming Initiative**

will offer a *Propagation Service for Nevada Farmers*. **Goals:** Provide tools, facility, and knowledge to Nevada farmers for propagation of organic specialty crops.

**Beneficiaries:** Nevada specialty crop farmers.



*Helping farmers who raise fruits, vegetables, and nuts with improved training, infrastructure, and marketing*

**Urban Roots Garden Classrooms and the Academy of Arts, Careers, and Technology**

will partner to continue the development of the *Young Farmers & Farm Stands Initiative*. **Goals:** Expand and promote school farm clubs, work with area farmers, and assist schools with developing student operated farm stands and CSAs.

**Beneficiaries:** Washoe County school district will benefit from this hands-on comprehensive model, built to expand upon curriculum established during a previous project. **University of Nevada Reno’s High Desert Farming Initiative and Urban Roots Garden Classrooms** are collaborating on the *High Desert Beekeeping and Pollinator Habitat Project*. **Goals:** Develop

guidelines for farmers and gardeners to identify and create beekeeping techniques in Nevada’s high-altitude dry climate.

**Beneficiaries:** High Desert farmers, gardeners, and beekeepers.

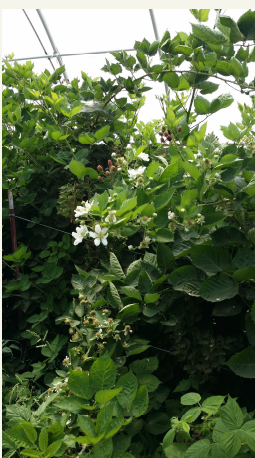


**Urban Roots Garden Classrooms and the University of Nevada Reno’s College of Agriculture, Biotechnology, and Natural Resources** plan to continue their efforts in year two of their hops research in the *High Desert Hops Project*. **Goals:** Identify hop varieties that will

thrive and yield high quality hops in Nevada’s high desert. **Beneficiaries:** Nevada farmers that currently farm or are considering farming hops. **The University of Nevada’s High Desert Farming Initiative** will establish *Best Practices for Raspberry Production in a Nevada Hoop House*.

**Goals:** Create a document outlining the best practices for growing raspberries in hoop houses in Nevada.

**Beneficiaries:** Nevada farmers who currently grow or are considering growing raspberries in hoop houses.



## **2015 SMALL FARMS CONFERENCE!**

The 2015 Small Farms Conference is quickly approaching! The conference is scheduled for January 23-24th at the Nugget in Sparks, Nevada. Pre-conference workshops will be held January 22nd and will include topics on the following: Hoop House production, Beer and spirits, Guerilla Marketing and Social Media, and Organic Production/Certification. Pre-conference workshops will also include tours of nearby operations!

The official conference will be held January 23-24th and will include a keynote speaker and various 90-minute sessions. Both local and out-of-state speakers will be present with extensive knowledge in the various facets of small farming. Session topics will include marketing and business planning, commercial viability of fruit, cut flowers, value-added, food safety, and beekeeping to name a few! To register for the conference or to learn more visit [nevadafarmconference.com/](http://nevadafarmconference.com/).

The 2015 conference planning committee strives to incorporate topics/speakers that will create and/or enhance small farm businesses and sustainability.



**2012 Small Farms Conference**

## **NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

For additional information on the Nevada Specialty Crop Grant Program

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The Nevada Department of Agriculture's (NDA) mission statement: Promote a sustainable agriculture and natural resources industry which works to protect food, fiber, human health, and safety through effective service, regulatory action and agricultural literacy.



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