

# Nevada Foundation Seed Program – Request for Applications

Division of Plant Health & Compliance



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## Fall seed application due September 12, 2024, by 5:00 p.m.

The Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) announces the availability of free native seed for cultivation from the Foundation Seed Program. This is a formal request for applications.

Applications should be emailed to [seed@agri.nv.gov](mailto:seed@agri.nv.gov) or mailed to:

Nevada Department of Agriculture  
ATTN: Seed Program  
405 South 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
Sparks, NV 89431

*For additional information, or if you have any questions regarding this RFA, contact Stephen Kielius at [seed@agri.nv.gov](mailto:seed@agri.nv.gov) or (775) 399-0284.*

### Background information

With the increasing prevalence of wildfires and increased priority for restoration projects, the need for locally adapted native plant species has never been higher. However, the majority of the seed used in Nevada is not genetically appropriate for the areas in which it is planted, but rather, adapted to cooler and wetter growing conditions than is available in this region. The NDA Foundation Seed Program aims to provide *free* native seed to producers so they may increase Nevada’s available seed stock to support restoration efforts. In return, the program asks that a portion of the applicant’s yield be returned at no cost to create a sustainable foundation program. The amount of seed returned to the program will be determined at the time of award on a case-by-case basis, not to exceed twice as many pounds as awarded. The applicant is then free to use or sell the remainder of their yield to be used in restoration, rehabilitation or for continued increase on their farm.

### Program goals

- The primary goal of the Foundation Seed Program is to increase the availability of high-quality, locally adapted native seed in Nevada, specifically to aid in rehabilitation efforts across the state.
- The second goal of the Foundation Seed Program is to support producers who consider cultivation of native species as an alternate, drought-resistant crop by reducing barriers of entry. To encourage this, the NDA will grant producers who haven’t previously produced native seed an additional five bonus points in the scoring rubric. If this is the case, please indicate so in the appropriate area of your application.

## Applicant eligibility

All applicants must be able and willing to comply with the following:

- As stated above, the primary goal of the Foundation seed program is to increase the availability of native seed in Nevada to be used to aid in rehabilitation efforts across the state. If you do not intend to sell, give or use seed yield to further these efforts, you may not qualify for this program.
  - Note: If scientific research is the intended use of the seed yield, exceptions may be made. If this is the case, please indicate in the appropriate area of your application.
- A portion of seed yield will be required to be returned to the Foundation Seed Program. Amounts will be determined on a case-by-case basis at the time of award and shall not exceed two times the amount of requested seed.
- The applicant and growing site must comply with all county/city ordinances.
- Applicant must have appropriate water rights for the intended use at the site location.
- Applicant must be the legal landowner *or* have a notarized statement from the landowner that gives authorization of native seed cultivation on the parcel and allows NDA staff access to the property for inspections.
- The applicant must perform noxious weed control in accordance with [NRS 555](#).
- The applicant must have the seed lot certified to the appropriate level of eligibility. The producer should adhere to the NDA's inspection criterion and shall coordinate with inspectors for scheduling of certification inspections. The costs associated with certification are listed on the NDA Seed Program webpage (link provided below).
  - *Each seed lot will be evaluated and assessed to determine the best mode of action for certified designations. These will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and representatives of the Department will be responsible for informing awardees regarding certification standards and requirements.*
- Applicant must be a Nevada resident to apply.
- The majority of the growing area must reside within Nevada to be considered for seed award.
- Applicant must make arrangements to receive awarded seed within two weeks of being notified of acceptance into the Foundation Seed Program. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of awarded seed unless the applicant receives prior approval from the NDA.

## Proposal requirements

Applications will be scored and awarded on a competitive basis. **All of the following must be included with your application:**

- A completed application form.
- A map that describes the location and features of the field area, including access details.
- A detailed timeline describing activities related to production. A grading rubric along with an example timeline will be provided at the end of this RFA.
- A water rights permit is required for all commercial production. Applicants without appropriate water rights risk application denial. For more information, contact Nevada Division of Water Resources at (775) 684-2800.
- If listing a business name, it must be a registered business through the Secretary of State's office. A copy of the applicant's Nevada business license must be included with the application.

## Resources

- [NDA's Seed Program webpage](#): Contains seed program contact information, seed certification applications and other seed-related resources.
- [Nevada Native Seed Partnership's webpage](#): Contains additional resources and contact information for local native plant experts.
- [USDA PLANTS Database](#): Contains information on many native plant species that may be useful for cultivation.
- [USDA Risk Management Agency](#): Contains information on crop insurance.

## Application rubric

Applicants who meet all the minimum requirements of the program will be evaluated using the following criteria to determine distribution of awards.

Criteria	Strong (8-10 points)	Satisfactory (5-7 points)	Needs improvement (3-4 points)	Missing project elements (0-2 points)	Total
<b>Project scope</b>	Timeline of project is clearly defined. Producer has listed major activities involved with production.	Timeline of project is fairly well defined. Producer has listed most major activities involved with production. One or two questions may arise.	Timeline of project is vague, and not enough detail is provided to identify potential outcomes.	Insufficient information or does not meet program requirements.	
<b>Familiarity with species</b>	Producer shows a clear familiarity with the species they want to work with, and their timeline reflects it.	There are some uncertainties within the timeline that may indicate the producer is not fully familiarized with a species.	Species-specific requirements are vague or do not match production practices.	Insufficient information or does not meet program requirements.	
<b>Project sustainability</b>	This is a sustainable project that will allow the species to produce more than one generation of seed (if applicable) and is backed by supporting information.	This is a sustainable project that will allow the species to produce one generation. Some questions may arise regarding the project's sustainability.	It is unclear or not fully supported if the project will allow the species to produce one generation. There are multiple questions on the project's sustainability.	Insufficient information or does not meet program requirements.	
<b>Previous experience</b>	Previous experience indicates several successful harvests of native species.	Previous experience indicates a successful harvest of native species.	Previous experience indicates a previous attempt at a successful harvest of native species.	No previous experience indicated with native species.	
<b>First-time grower bonus points</b>	To expand the program, five bonus points will be awarded to those applicants that have never produced native seed through the NDA Foundation Seed Program.				

Example timelines

Below are two examples of what the NDA is looking for. The first example is for a species that will complete its life cycle in one growing season, and the second is for a species that will complete its life cycle in more than one growing season. **Note that each species should have its own timeline and the information therein should be specific to that species.**

**Single Season Species Example**

<b>Fall – Planting</b>	<b>Spring – Growing Season</b>	<b>Summer - Harvest</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plant at depth of .25”</li><li>• Row spacing at 24”</li><li>• Rate of 10 lbs PLS per acre</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Netting installed to prevent seedling mortality due to predation</li><li>• Mechanical weeding measures as needed</li><li>• Irrigation as needed via drip irrigation</li><li>• Fertilize as needed</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Harvest via hand collection approximately early June – end of July</li><li>• Spread seed pods over screen to dry</li><li>• Send seed to be commercially cleaned and packaged</li></ul>

### Multiple Season Species Example

<b>Fall – Planting</b>	<b>Spring – Growing Season 1</b>	<b>Summer – Growing Season 1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acid wash seed to scarify seed coating</li> <li>• Plant at depth of 1”</li> <li>• Row spacing at 24”</li> <li>• Rate of 8 lbs. PLS per acre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply Bromoxynil as needed to control weeds</li> <li>• Apply insecticides as needed</li> <li>• Mechanical weeding measures as needed</li> <li>• Irrigation as needed, not to exceed 14” of water per acre</li> <li>• Fertilize as needed, approximately 80 pounds of nitrogen per acre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply Bromoxynil as needed to control weeds</li> <li>• Apply insecticides as needed</li> <li>• Mechanical weeding measures as needed</li> <li>• Irrigation as needed, not to exceed 14” of water per acre</li> <li>• Fertilize as needed, approximately 80 pounds of nitrogen per acre</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Fall – Growing Season 1</b>	<b>Spring – Growing Season 2</b>	<b>Summer – Harvest</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply Bromoxynil as needed to control weeds</li> <li>• Apply insecticides as needed</li> <li>• Mechanical weeding measures as needed</li> <li>• Irrigation as needed, not to exceed 14” of water per acre</li> <li>• Fertilize as needed, approximately 80 pounds of nitrogen per acre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply Bromoxynil as needed to control weeds</li> <li>• Apply insecticides as needed</li> <li>• Mechanical weeding measures as needed</li> <li>• Irrigation as needed, not to exceed 14” of water per acre</li> <li>• Fertilize as needed, approximately 80 pounds of nitrogen per acre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harvest via windrowing approximately mid-July</li> <li>• Allow swath to cure for 5-7 days then re-thrash</li> <li>• Dry seed immediately after combining until moisture content reaches 12%</li> <li>• Clean seed using an air/screen machine</li> </ul>