

The Specialty Crop Program Objectives and Guidelines

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The Why and What

The Nevada Department of Agriculture opens a competitive solicitation process to award funds for projects that enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops in Nevada. The state receives funding based on specialty crop retail sales and a formula which derives an amount received by each state. This year the state has \$130,000 to sub-award various projects which enhances the primary goals of the grant.

Program Overview

Program Purpose

- States receive a block grant from the United States Department of Agriculture, Marketing Service Office through the Farm Bill to Promote and Enhance the Competitiveness of Specialty Crops.

Program Overview

- The purpose of the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) is to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Specialty crops are defined as "fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture)."

Definition of Specialty Crops

Definition of Specialty Crops

- The Specialty Crop Competitiveness Act of 2004 and the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 have defined specialty crops as "fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture)." Eligible plants must be intensively cultivated and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification to be considered specialty crops. Processed products shall constitute greater than 50% of the specialty crop by weight, exclusive of added water.

SCBGP Description

- **Promote** - To help or encourage existing or flourishing; furthering: Educate, advance, outreach.
- **Enhance**- To rise to a higher degree; intensify; magnify: to improve or add to the strength, worth, beauty, or other desirable quality of something.

SCBGP Description Cont.

- **Competitiveness**- Is a comparative concept of the ability and performance of a firm, sub-sector or country to sell and supply goods and/or services in a given market. Although widely used in economics and business management, the usefulness of the concept, particularly in the context of national competitiveness. Empirical observation confirms that resources (capital, labor, technology) and talent tend to concentrate geographically (Easterly and Levine 2002). This result reflects the fact that firms are embedded in inter-firm relationships with networks of suppliers, buyers and even competitors that help them to gain competitive advantages in the sale of its products and services. While arms-length market relationships do provide these benefits, at times there are externalities that arise from linkages among firms in a geographic area or in a specific industry (textiles, leather goods, silicon chips) that cannot be captured or fostered by markets alone. The process of "clusterization," the creation of "value chains," or "industrial districts" are models that highlight the advantages of networks.

Program Objectives

- The primary goal of this program is to strengthen the market in the specialty crop industry.
- Through research, promotion, marketing, nutrition, trade enhancement, food safety, food security, plant health programs, education, increased consumption, improved efficiency, sustainable farming systems, school garden programs, and product development.

Program Objectives Cont.

- **Research:** Explores new methods to grow and cultivate specialty crops and identifies efficiencies in specialty production.
- **Promote:** Increases the consumption, use, or sales of specialty crops.
- **Marketing:** Encourages competitiveness in the specialty crop industry in order to strengthen the market for specialty crops.
- **Educate:** Teaches consumers and/or producers about various growing techniques or uses of specialty crops.

Examples of Appropriate Projects

- **Nutrition and Consumption:** A project which increases awareness and/or educates a population to consume specialty crops.
- **School Gardens:** 1) A project that researches crop growth and documents findings that can be shared with producers. 2) A School who wishes to research hydroponic growth of specialty crops.
- **Youth Education:** A project which educates students to grow and sell specialty crops.

Examples of Projects Cont.

- **Food Safety:** A project which explores processes that will improve the safety and distribution of specialty crops and shared with other producers, in order to increase the adoption of those processes in Nevada.
- **Trade Enhancement:** A project which encompasses research and outreach in order to share a product marketing campaign that would enhance the trade of specialty crops outside our borders.
- **Product Development:** A project that will explore a new method in processing specialty crops to decrease waste in order to increase a value-added market.

USDA's Example Acceptable Projects for single entities

- 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 specialty crop organization requests funds to conduct an advertising campaign that will benefit their specialty crop members.
- A single farmer erects high tunnels on their 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.

USDA's Example Unallowable Projects for single entities

- A company requests grant funds to purchase starter plants or equipment used to plant cultivate, and grow a specialty crop for the purpose of making a profit, or to expand production of a single business.
- 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 specialty crop producer requests funds to promote their asparagus at a roadside stand.

Is this the right fit?

Some Questions to Ask yourself when applying:

- 1) Does the Project Intent strengthen the specialty crop industry in some way?
- 2) Does the project have the potential to benefit an array of individuals, agribusinesses, and the industry at large.
- 3) Is this the most appropriate funding opportunity?

Examples: Uses other than specialty crops, community gardens, obesity education... (grants.gov)

SCBGP Guidelines

- Projects must be completed within three years. Completion of the project requires all the goals to be completed and funding to be expended by the end of the grant period.
- Projects cannot benefit/provide profit to one single organization, institution, or individual. Project Partners are encouraged.
- Program Income Must be reinvested into the program to promote and enhance Specialty Crops.

Unallowable Costs

- Lobbying
- Political activities
- Capital expenditures/Infrastructure Improvements
- General Purpose Equipment
- Equipment (\$5,000)
- Advertising that does not specifically Promote Specialty crops i.e. beef, dairy, and eggs. (Must have these approved by NDOA prior to purchasing)
- Advertising that promotes one entity, organization, or business. Note: use of USDA/NDOA disclosure



Allowable Costs

- Special Use equipment used only for research, scientific, or other technical activities (Must solely enhance Specialty Crops and Benefit the Spec. Crop Industry).
- Rental costs for buildings and equipment.
- Approved supplies, other, contractual, personnel costs and travel.

* These are also listed on the web-site

Post-Award Management

If You Are Awarded

- You must enter into a sub-contract and agree to comply with the following terms:
 - The Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations.
 - Complete all activities outlined in your approved proposal.
 - Comply with state and federal laws.
 - Follow your approved budget.
 - Sign and follow NV Ag policy/procedures documents.
 - Follow Award Terms and conditions of parent award.

Performance

- All projects must complete two annual performance reports and one final report 1-3 pages in length and cover specific criteria.
- Reports must be submitted in a required format and submitted timely.
- Site Inspections are also performed periodically to ensure objectives of the project are being met.

2014 Request For Proposal

- The 2014 RFP and attachments will be reviewed in this section please refer to your handouts.

Measurable Outcomes

“The value of a project cannot be measured without defining success”.

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Why Use Measurable Outcomes?

- Projects need to demonstrate that the SCBGP is successful in increasing specialty crop production and consumption.
- In order for the USDA, AMS to continue offering this program positive outcomes from funded projects need to be demonstrated.
- Measurable outcomes show whether projects are successful and provides a quantifiable measure of project results.
- Appropriate measurable outcomes are weighted heavily on the application scoring sheet.

What are Outcomes

Outcomes:

- Events, occurrences, changes in conditions, behavior, or attitudes that indicate progress toward a project's goals.
- Specific, Measurable, and meaningful.
- **Examples:**
 - Increase consumer awareness of local specialty crop producers.
 - Decrease pest damage to fruit.

Outcomes Continued

Outcomes are **NOT** activity based.

Example:

- “Conduct 5 training- workshops”
- “Install a salad bar in 20 schools”
- “Develop a new pest testing protocol”
- “Educate producers on good agriculture practices.”

These examples are **outputs** and do not reflect results achieved from the project.

Expressing Results

Proposals need to emphasize what results are expected from each output. What will the output achieve?

Example:

- Providing marketing training will increase learning by participants.
- Developing a new pest testing protocol will reduce pest damage to fruit.
- Providing educational trainings in good agricultural practices to producers will increase food safety knowledge.

Results and Measuring Outcomes

Once you have identified an outcome and expressed the results you should then define how you will measure those results.

Example:

Output- Provide educational trainings in good agricultural practices to producers.

Result- Increase food safety knowledge.

Measured Success- The increase in distribution outlets and/or sales.

What are you working for?

Measurable Outcomes help the project lead:

- Stay on track
- Measure and define project success throughout the project.
- Coordinate a project that is more likely to generate a significant impact to the specialty crop industry.
- Identifies whether the work plan needs to be revised.

Measurable Outcomes

- Allows you to define success.
- Helps determine what you are working towards.
- Measures results.
- Defines what you want to achieve?

Measurable Outcomes Cont.

- Outcomes should be something that the project wants to either maximize or minimize.

Example (maximize):

- "Increased learning by workshop participants".

Example (minimize)

- "Reduce pest damage to fruit"

Financial Outcomes

Example:

By Installing salad bars in schools an increased dollar amount of fruit and vegetable purchases will result.



Quantifiable Outcomes

Example:

Through training on Good Agricultural Practices, approximately 150 people will increase their knowledge in food safety.

Measurable Outcome: Trainings will increase food safety awareness in Nevada.

- How was this number determined?
- How many individuals have expressed interest and agreed to participate in trainings.

Quantifiable Outcomes

Example:

- By installing salad bars in Washoe County schools approximately 800 students will have access to healthy fruits and vegetables.

Quantifiable Objectives allow you to measure success.

How to Measure Results

Examples:

- Education- provide sign-in sheets, surveys, registration forms, etc. This may help assess whether outreach is successful.
- Promotion- assign a website visit counter, monitor enrollment records, membership records (CSA's), document inquiries, etc.
- Collaborative- document participating farms, membership records, farm visits, etc.
- School projects-record student participation, outreach attendance, garden tours, garden inquiries, number of curriculum documents dispersed, etc.

What are your Outcomes?



Increased salad bars in schools



Increased grape consumption



Increased grape production!

Outreach!!!

- Outreach components
- Who are the potential stakeholders?
- The following are some previously used outreach components:

Outreach Components

- Educational trainings
- Producer cooperatives and promotion
- Conduct research that may enhance production and release a publication.
- Youth education

Value-Added Education

To reduce crop waste and open up an alternative income channel for specialty crop producers a value-added processing facility is in the process of being opened. This project will educate producers on health regulations involving value-added processing, marketing, labeling, and recipes.

Stakeholders: Specialty Crop producers, transitioning producers, and future producers.

Youth Education

Smith Valley school developed a school garden to educate students on how to grow specialty crops. Produce was later marketed and sold at the Great Basin Food Cooperative.

Stakeholders:

Students and community members.

Smith Valley School Garden



Educational Trainings

- Western Nevada College, Specialty Crop Institute has identified educational needs of Nevada Specialty Crop Producers and developed a series of producer trainings.
- **Stakeholders:** Specialty Crop Producers, transitioning producers, consumers, and future producers.

Specialty Crop Institute Workshops



Research

- Friends of Nevada Organics coordinated a Pilot study of berry and bean production at Montessori School. Students were educated on specialty crop growing methods, hoop house production, and gathering/analyzing data.

Stakeholders:

Students, parents, and community members.

Montessori School Project



Hops in Nevada

- Urban Roots, The University of Nevada (CABNR), Cooperative Extension (UNCE), and High Desert Farming Inst. (HDFI) have collaborated to conduct a hop research project at the University Main Station Field Lab. The study will identify hop varieties that will thrive in Nevada and have high yields. The data will help other farmers grow and sell hops in Nevada.

NV Vines and Wines

- The University, NV Vines and Wines, and Main Station Farm have cooperated to do a demonstration/research project which will explore wine making, grape growing, climate conditions for certain varieties of plants Nevada's climate. The project will also analyze the profitability of results and share outcomes with stakeholders.

Marketing and Education

- University of Las Vegas piloted a program to give youth a hands on experience in horticulture that incorporate growing food and business practices. The second part to this project is developing a relationship/model with a local restaurant to determine feasibility in selling local products to local businesses/restaurants.

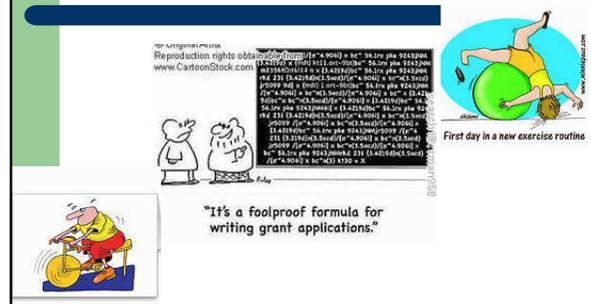
Producer Collaborative/groups

- This project encompasses joint marketing for small mid-size farms. The supply/demand is off-set by working together as well as off-setting costs for distribution and selling of specialty crops. The collaborative project also supported the purchase of joint use of planting equipment.

Promotion

- GBFC-Created farmer bios for specialty crop producers so that members of the GBFC were familiar with local specialty crop growers, what they grow, and what type of production they have.
- Providing advertising for annual seedling sale which promoted specialty crop plants from various growers. Advertising promoted the specialty crop growers/products and not the GBFC.

Application Exercises Good vs Bad



Abstract- Good or Bad?

Storm troopers like fresh fruits and vegetables and say they need more fresh fruits and vegetables in order to help them think and not be mind controlled by Darth Vader. This project will allow Storm troopers to eat more fresh fruits and vegetables. 85% of Storm Troopers say they would eat more local fruits and vegetables.

Abstract- Good or Bad

The Death Star Cooperative Extension Services (DSCE) released a survey during December of 2013 to all storm troopers aboard the ship to assess whether there is a demand for local fruits and vegetables. 80% of the 300 plus storm troopers that completed the survey indicated that if there was local produce aboard the Death Star they would pay for fresh produce as apposed to dehydrated produce. In order to address the need identified through the survey, grant funding is being requested for DSCE and Death Star Agriculture Services (DSA) to create community gardens throughout the Death Star that will increase production and availability of local fresh produce. In addition, funding will be used to research production methods that are affective and sustainable in space. Research results will be discussed during three workshops and will be published on the Death Star's Agriculture Website.

Good or Bad?

Project Purpose Good vs Bad

It is important for Storm Troopers to maintain a healthy diet and consume fresh fruits and vegetables. The consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables helps them navigate through space and remain on the dark side. Fresh fruits and vegetables will be grown on the Death Star so that Storm Troopers can consume more fresh fruits and vegetables.

Project Purpose Good vs Bad

Research conducted by the Death Star Cooperative Extension Services indicates that there is a high demand for fresh produce on the death star. Surveys indicate that Storm Troopers would consume specialty crops that are available on the Death Star, however there is little research available on how to grow specialty crops in green houses aboard the death star. Research will be performed utilizing three different growth models (hydroponic, aquaponic, and conventional) and in order to identify which methods are feasible for growing produce. A team of research experts from DSCE and agriculture experts from DSA will collaborate in implementing research on three different growth methods aboard the Death Star. The information found will be published and available to the garden community, Little Storm Trooper Academy for school gardens, additional Death Star ships, and any other interested individuals. Three training on the project results will be provided in order to promote further production of specialty crops.

Work Plan Good vs Bad

- Do research by end of year 2999.
- Grow plants by 2999.
- Train people by 3000.
- Publish results by 3001

Work Plan Good vs Bad

- DSCE will collaborate with DSA in purchasing potential specialty crops for each trial. When: December 2999, Who: Luke, DSCE; Hans DSA.
- Equipment for conducting growth systems will be identified and purchased. When By January 2999, Who: Luke, DSCE; Hans DSA.
- First trial of growth systems will be performed and DSA will record growth data. When January 2999-January 3000, Who: Luke, DSCE.
- Growth systems will be analyzed and discussed with DSA in order to prepare for the second growth trial. When February 3000, Who: Luke, DSCE; Hans DSA.

Measurable Outcomes Good Vs. Bad

Example:

Through performing research on three different specialty crop production systems on the Death Star, approximately 1000 Storm Troopers and their families will increase their knowledge on how to grow specialty crops .

Measurable Outcome: Research will increase awareness on specialty crop production aboard the Death Star.

Measurable Outcomes Good Vs. Bad

- Research will be conducted on three different specialty crop growth systems (hydroponic, aquaponic, and conventional) in order to increase specialty crop production.
- Storm Troopers will learn about research.

Web-sites

- http://www.agri.state.nv.us/PLANT_SCBGP.htm
- <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/scbqp>
- ✓ Forms
- ✓ Templates
- ✓ Deadlines
- ✓ Examples of Projects
- ✓ Eligible specialty crops

Contact Information

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Thank You for your participation!

Keep up the good work and keep growing good things!