



Washington State Department of Agriculture

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For immediate release: Jan. 24, 2013 (13-03)

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WSDA announces competitive process to award specialty crop grants

Pre-proposals due Feb. 25, 2013

OLYMPIA – Do you have an idea to enhance Washington’s specialty crops – primarily fruits, vegetables or nursery products? If so, you might consider applying for a Specialty Crop Block Grant.

The [Washington State Department of Agriculture](#) (WSDA) announced today that approximately \$3 million in federal grants will be available to enhance the state’s fruit, vegetable and nursery industry. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is expected to provide this funding to Washington through its [Specialty Crop Block Grant Program](#) (SCBG), authorized under a one-year extension to the federal 2008 Farm Bill.

Private and non-profit organizations, commodity commissions and other public entities can request between \$25,000 to \$250,000 for projects that benefit the competitiveness of specialty crop producers. All projects must be completed within three years.

The timeline for WSDA’s 2013 grant competition includes:

- Pre-Proposals due to WSDA by 5 p.m. Feb. 25, 2013. Email them to specialtycrop@agr.wa.gov.
- WSDA will review pre-proposals and invite full proposals in early April.
- Complete grant proposals are due to WSDA in late April.
- WSDA will select and submit the winning proposals to USDA in mid-July.
- USDA will announce their awards in October and WSDA grant agreements will be issued by November 2013.
- WSDA will offer unsuccessful applicants the opportunity to request feedback on their proposals.

Visit www.agr.wa.gov/Grants/SCBGP for application information and forms.

For more information on the program, lists of eligible products and the federal requirements, go to the USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service at www.ams.usda.gov/scbcp or contact WSDA’s Rianne Perry at rperry@agr.wa.gov or (360) 902-2177.

Based on feedback from Washington’s specialty crop industries, WSDA is seeking projects that focus on controlling pests and diseases, improving food safety, promoting international trade, protecting key resources, enhancing domestic markets, and developing organic and sustainable production practices.

MORE

Projects that benefit Washington’s specialty crop producers and processors in other ways are also encouraged. Each project must demonstrate measurable benefits for the specialty crop industry and must not assist just a single producer or company. Projects that benefit Washington in addition to other states are encouraged, as are projects that benefit new farmers or socially disadvantaged farmers. Matching funds are not required but are strongly encouraged.

This past October, WSDA distributed \$3 million for 25 projects as part of this program. Visit www.agr.wa.gov/Grants/docs/2012AwardAbstracts.pdf to see a list of these projects. Washington ranks third in the nation in production of specialty crops.

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