



# Washington State Department of Agriculture

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## **WSDA seeks innovative proposals to boost state's specialty crops**

*Concept proposals due Feb. 28*

**OLYMPIA** – The [Washington State Department of Agriculture](#) (WSDA) is now accepting proposals for innovative projects to support the state's fruit, vegetable and nursery industry through the federal Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Proposals are due to WSDA by 5 p.m. Feb. 28.

WSDA manages the grants, which are funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). About \$3 million will be available to Washington upon passage of the U.S. Farm Bill.

Private and non-profit organizations, commodity commissions and other public entities may request funds for projects of \$25,000 to \$250,000 that benefit the competitiveness of fruit, vegetable, tree nut and nursery crop producers.

The first step in applying for grant funding is to submit a brief concept proposal using a form provided by WSDA. Email proposals to [specialitycrop@agr.wa.gov](mailto:specialitycrop@agr.wa.gov). The proposals will be reviewed by WSDA, and successful applicants will be asked to submit full proposals for further review. Application information, forms and the milestone schedules are provided on WSDA's [website](http://www.agr.wa.gov/grants/scbgp) ([www.agr.wa.gov/grants/scbgp](http://www.agr.wa.gov/grants/scbgp)). For additional information, go to the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service at [www.ams.usda.gov/scbgp](http://www.ams.usda.gov/scbgp) or contact WSDA's Rianne Perry at [rperry@agr.wa.gov](mailto:rperry@agr.wa.gov) or (360) 902-2177.

Based on feedback from Washington's specialty crop industries, WSDA is seeking projects that promote international and domestic trade, increase water availability, develop new crop varieties, control pests and diseases, reduce regulatory barriers, and increase production through innovative technologies.

Projects that benefit Washington's specialty crop producers and food processors in other ways, benefit Washington and other states, or that benefit new farmers or socially disadvantaged farmers are also encouraged.

Washington ranks third in the nation in production of specialty crops and last year funded [23 projects](#) under USDA's specialty crop program. USDA will announce their awards this fall and WSDA grant agreements will be issued in November.

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