



# Washington State Department of Agriculture

PO Box 42560  
Olympia, Washington 98504-2560  
*Visit our Web site at:* [agr.wa.gov](http://agr.wa.gov)  
[Subscribe to WSDA News Releases](#)

For immediate release: Oct. 18, 2016

Contact: [Mike Louisell](#) (360) 902-1813

## **Washington receives \$4.3 million in federal specialty crop grant funds**

**OLYMPIA** - The [Washington State Department of Agriculture](#) (WSDA) and U.S. Department of Agriculture have announced this year's recipients of Specialty Crop Block Grant Program funds, including \$4.3 million for Washington state.

The [2016 USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant](#) will fund 21 projects managed by WSDA in partnership with other organizations. Washington ranks second in the nation behind California in production of specialty crops, including fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops and floriculture.

Awards for individual projects range from \$55,000 to \$300,000 and will go to agricultural commodity commissions, agricultural associations, non-profit organizations, Washington State University and WSDA. WSU is the grant recipient for nine of the projects.

This year, pears and apples, berries, nursery, lentils, potatoes, and projects to enhance food safety are among the funded projects. Some of the projects include those that will help educate growers on the new Food Safety Modernization Act, increase availability of water rights for Snoqualmie Valley specialty crop growers, enhance Latino and small farm growers' knowledge in food safety, and connect the public to Washington's specialty crops through the Washington Grown TV show. Another will survey acreage for tree fruits and grapes.

Here is a link to a [summary of the 21 projects](#).

The USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program was created to support the competitiveness of the specialty crop industry through the [USDA Agricultural Marketing Service](#). In awarding these funds, WSDA selected projects that will directly benefit specialty crop producers, address critical issues to the industry and contain strong performance measures.

WSDA has received more than \$27 million over the past nine years for projects supported by the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.

###

Follow WSDA: [AgBriefs Blog](#) [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [YouTube](#)