



Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Grant Manual

Fiscal Year 2008 Funding Cycle
(10/1/2008 - 9/30/2009)

**Application Due Date:
November 3, 2008**

The forms in this manual may be reproduced.
Additional copies of this publication may be obtained
from our website at:

www.wvagriculture.org/scbqp08grantmanual.pdf



State of West Virginia
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Gus R. Douglass, Commissioner

Janet L. Fisher
Deputy Commissioner

Steve Hannah
Deputy Commissioner

October 1, 2008

Dear Grant Applicant:

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture is pleased to provide this manual as a guide to assist you in preparation of your Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP). The purpose of this program is to promote the increased consumption of fruits, vegetables, nuts, honey and other specialty products and to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops in West Virginia.

This manual is designed to assist you in preparing your grant application successfully in order to maximize the competitiveness of your project in the review process. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the application requirements and deadlines.

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture anticipates that grant monies awarded under this program will be available in 2008. The maximum grant application amount is \$10,000.00. General program information, rating criteria and application packet requirements are included.

Please feel free to call the Marketing & Development Division (304-558-2210) for questions and application procedures as you prepare your project. Thank you for your interest in this important program and we look forward to receiving your application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Gus R. Douglass".

Gus R. Douglass
Commissioner

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List of Terms and Acronyms

Administrative Costs-All executive, organizational, and clerical costs associated with the general management of an organization and not costs for the direct execution of the grant project.

AMS-Agricultural Marketing Service (a division of USDA)

Authorized Signature-Signature of authorized signer, title within the organization is requested.

Authorized Signer-Individual authorized to receive funds on behalf of grantee and the person who becomes responsible for the execution of grant project responsibilities.

Collaboration-Any cooperative effort of eligible applicants, universities, or industry trade associations to execute the completion of the proposed grant project.

DBA-Doing business as

FY2008-Federal fiscal year 2008; October 1, 2008 to September 30, 2009

Grant Award Agreement-WVDA's contract with the authorized signer indicating the grantee's intention to complete the proposed tasks and authorizing WVDA to monitor the progress of the proposed project.

Matching Funds-A cash contribution toward the completion of the project or new, verifiable in-kind expenditures that the applicant or collaborators will incur contingent upon receiving a grant award.

Project- Activities proposed to be funded by the SCBGP

Specialty Crop-Fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and nursery crops (including floriculture). See expanded list on page 6.

SCBGP-Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

USDA-United States Department of Agriculture

WVDA-West Virginia Department of Agriculture

Mission Statement

The mission of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture is to protect plant, animal and human health and the state's food supply through a variety of scientific and regulatory programs; to provide vision, strategic planning and emergency response for agricultural and other civil emergencies; to promote industrial safety and protect consumers through educational and regulatory programs; and to foster economic growth by promoting West Virginia agriculture and agribusinesses throughout the state and abroad.

Background

The Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 authorized the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to promote the increased consumption of fruits, vegetables, nuts and to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Under the Act, the Secretary of Agriculture is directed to make grants to States for each of the fiscal years 2005 through 2009 to be used by State departments of agriculture to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

Funding Source and Available Funds

AMS is charged with distributing approximately \$7 million in block grant funds to state departments of agriculture, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. WVDA has been notified that USDA has allocated approximately \$90,000.00 in funds available for competitive proposal purposes in the fiscal year 2008 funding cycle. Grant awards are capped at \$10,000.000 per grant. Determination of funding allocations will be competitive with awards made to the top qualifying applicants. Matching contributions by applicants, although not required, are highly encouraged and will be factored into the approval criteria.

Only one proposal from an organization may be submitted for consideration.

Travel expenses associated with the project shall follow the WVDA travel policy.

Grant funds may not be used to fund political activities in accordance with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. 1501-1508 and 7324-7326).

Eligible Applicants

State and/or local organizations, producer associations, academia, community based organizations, and other specialty crop stakeholders are eligible to apply either as single entities or in combined efforts.

Proposals that involve collaboration or partnerships between producers, industry groups, academics, or other organizations are encouraged and will be given priority.

Under USDA rules, grants can not be awarded for projects that directly benefit a particular commercial product or provide a profit to a single company or individual.

Eligible Specialty Crops

Commonly recognized fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and nursery crops (including floriculture) are eligible specialty crops in addition to the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Algae | Honey |
| Christmas trees | Hops |
| Cocoa | Kava |
| Coffee | Lavender |
| Cut flowers | Maple syrup |
| Dry edible beans | Mushrooms |
| Dry peas | Peppermint |
| Foliage | Potatoes |
| Fruit grapes for wine | Seaweed |
| Ginger root | Spearmint |
| Ginseng | Vanilla |
| Herbs | Vegetable Seeds |

Ineligible Commodities

- Cotton and cottonseed
- Feed crops such as barley, corn, hay, oats, sorghum grain, millet, alfalfa
- Flaxseed
- Food grains such as rice, rye, wheat
- Livestock and dairy products, including eggs
- Marine or fresh water aquaculture
- Oil crops such as peanut, soybean, sunflower, safflower, rapeseed, canola, mustard seed
- Peanuts
- Range grasses
- Sod
- Sugar beets
- Sugarcane
- Tobacco
- Turf

Project Eligibility

Project proposals should focus on enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops through one or more of the following four categories:

- a. Promotion/Marketing
- b. Research
- c. Education/Training
- d. Innovation/Efficiency (Facilities/Equipment)

Examples of “enhancing the competitiveness” of specialty crops includes but is not limited to: research, promotion, marketing, nutrition, trade enhancement, food safety, food security, plant health programs, education, “buy local” programs, increased consumption, increased innovation, improved efficiency and reduced costs of distribution systems, environmental concerns and conservation, product development, and developing cooperatives.

Funding under this program will be available for projects extending no more than three years beyond the project start date.

Eligible Expenditures

Examples of eligible expenses include, but are not limited to: promotional materials, such as signs and brochures for farmers’ markets; developing associations to promote specialty crops; creating a cooperative to increase “purchasing power”; consumer education and increased consumption marketing campaigns (i.e. buy local initiative); product development of specialty crops; improved planting techniques to increase yield, and innovative fencing use to protect crops.

Ineligible Expenditures

Ineligible SCBGP expenses include, but are not limited to; brick and mortar (construction) projects; establishing secondary grant pools (sub grants to other entities or pass-through grants), land acquisitions, taxes, vehicle registration, paying off existing debt, substituting existing efforts or research already funded, business entertainment or business gifts, overhead expenses or indirect costs, legal costs, contingency funds, proposal preparation, insurance, contractual project administration, costs for which payment has or will be received under another federal, state, or private funding program, any expenses incurred prior to the award date of this grant, personal labor and expenses, and political or lobbying activities.

No administration costs may be allocated to the budgeted project.

General Compliance

All awarded grant projects must comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations and the terms of the grant award.

Permitting Requirements

SCBGP funded projects may involve conducting work that requires permits and clearances from various agencies. WVDA does not determine which, if any, permits are required for specific projects nor does it review permits for accuracy or appropriateness. Applicants are responsible for determining, obtaining and paying for all necessary permits that apply to their project.

Indemnification

The parties to this contract agree that the State of West Virginia, its departments, agencies, boards and commissions shall be indemnified and held harmless by the contractor for the vicarious liability of the State as a result of entering into this contract. Each party to this contract is responsible for its own negligence.

Non-Availability of Funds

Every payment obligation of the State under the Grant Award Agreement will be conditioned upon the availability of such funds appropriated or allocated for the payment of such obligation. If funds are not allocated and available for the continuance of the Agreement, the Agreement may be terminated by the State at the end of the period for which funds are available. No liability shall accrue to the State in the event this provision is exercised, and the State shall not be obligated or liable for any future payments or for any damages as a result of termination under this paragraph.

Records Requirements

The grantee will be responsible for setting up and maintaining a project file that contains all records of correspondence with WVDA, receipts, invoices and copies of all reports and documents associated with the project. All records shall be subject to inspection and audit by state personnel at reasonable times. Upon request, the grantee shall produce a legible copy of any or all such records.

All applicants must submit a final report for their project specifying how the goals and results were met.

Submission of documents to become a registered West Virginia vendor is the responsibility of the grant recipient. If you received specialty crops grant in past fiscal years, awarding of funding in this cycle is contingent on submission of a final or progress report for the previous award.

Any information or data derived from a West Specialty Crops Block Grant must be made available to WVDA, which reserves the right to share these results with the general public.

Annual Reports

Grantees are required to submit written performance reports annually to WVDA detailing the project status and how grant monies were used to achieve project outcomes outlined in the project proposal submitted with the grant application packet. Annual reports are due on December 31 of the calendar year and should also include a financial report submitted in the form of a narrative, copies of receipts and a completed expenditure log. Performance reports must be submitted to WVDA on an annual basis until the project is completed at which time a final, comprehensive report is due.

Monitoring

WVDA reserves the ability to perform site monitoring visits to any and all grantees to ensure that work is progressing within the required time frame and that fiscal procedures are followed accurately and appropriately. Monitoring includes both financial and program information as well as site visits.

Printed Materials

The following copy must be included on all printed materials and advertisements relating to the project: *"Funds for this project were provided through the West Virginia Department of Agriculture and the USDA's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program."*

Budget and Grant Period Adjustments

If a project budget adjustment is needed during the project period, a written request must be made to WVDA describing the reallocation, redefining of project dates or other significant changes to the project submitted and approved. Changes and adjustments are subject to WVDA and/or USDA approval. Please describe the circumstances and reasoning for any adjustments clearly. A change/extension form will be signed by a WVDA representative once USDA approval has been granted.

Unexpended Funds

Grantees who receive grant funds will return to WVDA the unexpended balance of awarded grant funds at the end of the grant period.

Application Packet Details and Format

Application packets must be submitted in entirety. Incomplete application packets will not be given further consideration. Your application packet must include the following:

Proposal must be organized and have the requested information in the sequence presented under the section, **Application Packet Information**.

- An entity may only submit one application.

- Proposals should be typed, single spaced and in 12 point format.
- Illegible application packets may be determined to be ineligible.
- Proposals must be submitted on 8.5x11 white paper with one inch margins.
- Each page should be numbered, with applicant's name at the top of each page.
- It is strongly suggested that application packets not exceed 20 pages including supplemental documentation.
- If the organization received a previous SCBGP award, the proposal should clearly describe the previous project and its key results and explain why this is a new project. Sustainability of programs will be considered with previous grant award recipients.
- Do not bind application packets. All application packets should be paper clipped in the upper left-hand corner.
- If possible an electronic version of the application packet (in MS Word format) should be submitted to one of the email addresses listed in the contact information.
- Submit ONE complete original application packet and FOUR additional copies.
- The person authorized to receive funds must sign the original copy of the application.

Application Packet Due Date

WVDA's Marketing and Development Division must receive completed application packets no later than **3:00 p.m. on Monday, November 3, 2008. This is not a postmark deadline; application packets must be received by the grant deadline and time.** Application packets that do not adhere to this deadline will not be accepted and will be returned unopen. Application packets must be mailed or delivered to:

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
West Virginia Department of Agriculture
Marketing & Development Division
1900 Kanawha Blvd East
Charleston, WV 25305

Contact Information

Debra Gard
(304) 558-2210
FAX (304) 558-2270
dgard@ag.state.wv.us

Cindy Martel
(304) 469-9738
(304) 469-3718
cmartel@ag.state.wv.us

**West Virginia Department of Agriculture
Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Application
FY2008**

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Application form and packet must be completed in its entirety and required documentation attached.
All applications should be typed.
Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.
Refer to the application guidelines when completing your submission.

Business Information

1. Name of Agribusiness_____
2. Federal Tax ID Number or Social Security Number_____
3. Mailing Address_____
4. City/Zip_____
5. Agribusiness type (Corporation, partnership, sole proprietor, other)

6. President, Owner, Officer_____ (Include title)
7. Manager (If different)_____
8. Phone_____ FAX_____
9. Years in Business_____ Number of Employees_____
10. E-Mail Address_____ Web Address_____

Project Information

11. Project Name_____
12. Location of Proposed Project_____
13. County of Proposed Project_____
14. Amount of time (months) needed to complete project_____
15. Is this the first time you have applied for this grant? ____Yes ____No
16. If no, what was the past project/fiscal year of funding?_____

Application Packet Information

Application Packet Requirements

All applicants **MUST** adhere to the following instructions, in addition to other requirements as stated in this grant manual, including all definitions and abbreviations, to be considered eligible for grants. Application Packets missing any of the required information may be deemed ineligible and not considered for funding.

- 1. Cover page and abstract-**Include the name of the applicant or organization administering the project along with an abstract of **200** or fewer words describing the proposed project.
- 2. Project Purpose-**Clearly state the specific issue, problem, interest or need to be addressed. Explain why the project is important and timely. (Do not exceed two paragraphs)
- 3. Potential Impact-**Discuss the number of people or operations affected, the intended beneficiaries for the project and/or the potential economic impact if data from the project or a similar program is available. (One page or less)
- 4. Goals-**Describe the overall goal(s) of the project in one or two sentences. If the project has multiple activities, be sure to specify goals for each activity and how they relate to the overall project effectiveness. (One page or less)
- 5. Expected Measurable Outcomes-**Describe at least two distinct, quantifiable and measurable outcomes that directly and meaningfully support your project's purpose.

Questions to be answered can include:

- a. How will success of the project be determined?*
 - b. Can project benefits be measured, reported, and tracked over time?*
 - c. What elements will be monitored or evaluated? By Whom? How often? How long?*
 - d. Does the measurement define an event or condition that is external to the project and that is important to the identified beneficiaries, public and/or specialty crops industry in the state?*
- 6. Work Plan-**Describe your proposal and its expected benefit to the West Virginia Specialty Crops industry. Explain how each goal and measurable outcome will be accomplished. Be clear about who will do the work. Include appropriate time lines. Outcomes may exceed the grant period; simply indicate that they exceed the grant period and what work will be ongoing.

Considerations in this section (not requirements) include:

- a. Does the project provide an overall economic benefit to West Virginia's agricultural and specialty crop industry?*

- b. *Does the project make good business sense and does it have a high likelihood of success?*
- c. *Are the expected benefits of the proposal proportionate with total investment?*
- d. *Does the project contribute to a positive image of West Virginia specialty crops and agriculture?*
- e. *Does the project provide educational benefits to the public about West Virginia specialty crops and agriculture?*
- f. *Does the project enhance capacity development, infrastructure, or create jobs?*

(No more than two pages)

7. Project Commitment and Oversight-Describe the partnerships, alliances, networks, or other collaborative efforts that would be created to implement this project. List all parties involved and describe what each contributes in skills and abilities to make this proposal succeed and work toward the goals and outcomes, as well as the commitments for each party (in-kind, monetary, labor, etc.) Describe who and how the project will be managed. (One page or less)

8. Financial Feasibility-How do you intend to use the grant funds? Provide a breakdown of the components of the proposal and where the grant funds fit into the overall project financing. Prioritize funding needs, if possible. Provide budget estimates for the total project cost. ***Remember, no administrative funds may be included in the budget request.***

Considerations include:

- a. *Grant funds are being targeted for spending as indicated in the project work plan to make the project successful;*
- b. *The project makes good business sense according to the proposed expenses and activities noted in the budget;*
- c. *The budget supports the anticipated benefits and whether the benefits are proportionate with the total project financing;*
- d. *Can accounting and project records be readily retrieved and reported?*

(A sample form to outline your budget request is attached and this question should require no more than 1 page of narrative.)

SAMPLE BUDGET

Category	SCBGP	Cash	In-Kind	Total	Comments
Printing & design costs	\$3,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$5,000	10 hours @ \$20/hour by graphic designer; printing & delivery costs by XYZ printer (Wine directory)
Equipment lease/rental		\$500		\$500	Description of equipment needed and what component of project addressed
Supplies			\$500	\$500	What and by whom
Travel		\$405		\$405	List estimated mileage, prevailing state reimbursement rate for meals, mileage and lodging; who will be doing the traveling?
Consultant	\$2,500			\$2,500	Consultant fee; describe what the consultant will do
TOTALS	\$5,500	\$1,905	\$1,500	\$8,905*	

Note: Total project costs may exceed \$10,000 but the column total for SCBGP funding may not request more than \$10,000

9. Signed Agreements Page-See Attached.

**West Virginia Department of Agriculture
FY2008 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
Application Agreement**

I/we the undersigned applicants, _____
(Name/Names)
of _____, West Virginia, hereby make
(City/Cities)(please list county also)
application for specialty crop block grant program funds, under the
terms and conditions of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, in
the amount of \$ _____. The total project cost is
(Amount requested)

\$ _____.
(Total project amount)

The undersigned hereby warrant to the State of West Virginia that to the best of my/our knowledge, all information presented in this grant application is factual and true; that I/we understand that if this proposal is funded, I/we will be required to sign a grant agreement and other necessary documentation containing terms and conditions upon which funds will be released; and that I/we understand that I/we will be required to submit progress report(s) and a final report at the completion of the project as a condition to participating in this grant program.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

Program Policies

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals received;
- Request additional information on project proposals;
- Recommend partial funding for proposal that may be less than the full amount requested in the grant application; and
- Tie the release of project funds to completion of necessary progress reports and previous grant information.

Grant Proposal Review and Selection

All application packets will be evaluated by the SCBGP Evaluation Team after the grant application packet submittal deadline. The Evaluation Team will be made up of individuals designated by the Commissioner of Agriculture or his designee. Information from funded proposals will be used to create the State SCBGP submitted to USDA for final approval.

Notification of Award

All eligible proposals will be reviewed. Successful proposals will be chosen on the merits of the project as they relate to the criteria specified in the Application Packet Requirements and will be included in the West Virginia State Plan which will be submitted to USDA AMS as soon as possible.

Applicants will be notified in writing if their project is not selected for inclusion in the West Virginia State Plan. Upon approval of the West Virginia State Plan by USDA AMS, applicants will be notified in writing as to whether or not they received a grant award.

Successful applicants will also be sent a Grant Award Agreement to sign and an invoice for check request. These documents will require grantees to agree to grant award conditions described in this manual and those dictated by West Virginia contracting requirements. Grant Award Agreements must be signed and returned to WVDA within 30 days of receipt. Failure to submit an executed copy of the Grant Award Agreement within 30 days of receipt will result in the loss of awarded grant funds, unless the delay was caused by circumstances outside the control of the grantee.

Grantees must be registered in the West Virginia FIMS system in order for payment to be issued.

Please do not call the West Virginia Department of Agriculture to check the status of your application packet. Funded projects can not begin to accrue expenses until the State Plan and USDA AMS agreements are in place. You will not be able to be reimbursed for any expenditures until this date is determined.

SCBGP Checklist

- One original and four copies** of application packet printed on white paper and fastened with a paperclip in the upper left-hand corner.

Each containing:

- Cover page and abstract
- Project Purpose
- Potential Impact
- Goals
- Expected Measurable Outcomes
- Work Plan
- Project Commitment and Oversight
- Financial Feasibility-Detailed Budget
- Signed Agreement Page
- Supplemental Materials, Letters of Recommendations, etc. *

- If possible, electronic version of grant email to WVDA

*Total project packet should not total more than 20 pages