

New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets

***Specialty Crop Block
Grant Program
Funding Criteria***

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Project Purpose – 12 Points

- What is the specific issue, problem, need or opportunity the project will address?
- Why is the project timely?
- What are the specific objectives of the project?
- How effective will the project be at enhancing the competitiveness of NY specialty crops?

Project Purpose - Example

Many school children do not have access to healthy fruits and vegetables (ISSUE). The School Nutrition Association will subsidize installation of salad bars in forty schools to increase access to nutritious fruits, vegetables and nuts in school breakfasts and lunches (OBJECTIVE). Not only will this result in increased purchases from specialty crop growers, but the evaluation component also will provide a model for other schools in their efforts to market healthy meals to children (IMPORTANCE).

Project Purpose - Example

The applicant will partner with a production team to create a suite of six television and radio public service announcements to introduce and promote locally produced specialty crops (OBJECTIVE) thereby changing the purchasing behavior of consumers and retailers to “buy local” (NEED). This project is a State marketing program. The applicant will only promote eligible specialty crops (may include comprehensive list of eligible specialty crops).

Project Purpose - Example

The recent introduction of X virus has threatened specialty crop production; the virus has already caused enormous crop losses in NYS (PROBLEM). This research proposal will assess the likely spread of the virus from the initial introduction point and will identify plant reservoir hosts for the disease to form the basis for an integrated pest management strategy to prevent further crop losses (IMPORTANCE and OBJECTIVE).

Potential Impact – 27 Points

- Who are the beneficiaries and how will they be impacted?
- How many beneficiaries (people or operations) will be impacted relative to the grant dollars spent?
- What is the potential economic impact?

Potential Impact - Example

In 2008, according to USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the State's specialty crop industry occupied 3100 acres and had a value for utilized production of \$20 million. This is evidence of the success and potential for this program. New specialty crop varieties being developed through this program will enable the State's 150 farmers (# OF BENEFICIARIES) to be competitive in growing and marketing these specialty crops (HOW BENEFICIARIES WILL BE IMPACTED). These new crops could provide \$10 - \$15 million in additional farm income (POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT).

Potential Impact - Example

Existing and new specialty crop growers taking part in the grower education will receive an extensive education on many aspects of participating in specialty crop production and direct retail marketing (BENEFICIARIES). It is estimated that the number of specialty crop growers that will be participating in the educational workshops is 50 (# OF BENEFICIARIES). Through grower education, farmers will be exposed to information on how to grow crops and successfully sell their produce at direct-to-consumer markets (HOW BENEFICIARIES WILL BE IMPACTED).

Measurable Outcomes – 20 Points

- Does the project have at least one distinct, quantifiable and measurable outcome that directly supports the project's purpose?
- How and when will performance toward meeting the outcome(s) be monitored?
- How will data be gathered be used to improve the project's performance, if necessary?

Measurable Outcomes - Steps

- Determine what the project will accomplish – Goal or Objective
- Figure out to measure the results and select the Performance Measure
- Determine the Benchmark for each measure and set the Target goals for future performance
- Develop your performance monitoring plan or data collection plan

Measurable Outcomes - Example

Increase the number of specialty crop farmers following Good Agricultural Practices (GOAL) from the current 18 (BENCHMARK) to 55 in two years (TARGET) measured by the number of GAP audits passed (PERFORMANCE MEASURE).

Increase fruit and vegetable purchases (GOAL) from the current level of \$2.50 (BENCHMARK) to at least \$3 per enrolled student in awarded schools in one year (TARGET) measured by bi-annual school reports (PERFORMANCE MEASURE).

Measurable Outcomes - Example

Develop a predictive model for the spread of the specialty crop disease, an analysis of virus resistant varieties, and a foundation for an integrated pest management (IPM) strategy to combat the disease (GOAL). No such model currently exists (BENCHMARK). The information will be shared with more than 700 tomato growers, increasing awareness of the model, at the 2008 conference break-out session (TARGET) measured by attendance at the session (PERFORMANCE MEASURE).

Work Plan – 21 Points

- Are the activities that are necessary to accomplish the project's objectives clearly and adequately identified?
- Is the project and timeline feasible?
- Are the individuals who will be implementing and overseeing work plan activities well qualified?

Work Plan - Example

Project Activity	Who	Timeline
Create a survey to assess growers' background, current pest control program, and perceptions of IPM	State University Staff	Begin January 2011 0-4 months
Administer survey to 200 growers at annual meeting	Cooperative Extension Staff	4-5 months
Compile survey results	Cooperative Extension Staff	5-6 months
Review survey results for likely cooperative candidates	State University Staff	5 months

Include resumes of key personnel that will be performing work

Budget – 20 Points

- How reasonable and appropriate is the amount requested and budgeted for the project?

Budget - Example

The Regional Buy Local Program will partner with a production team from WSAM TV to create a suite of 12 monthly television public service announcements to introduce and promote locally produced specialty crops. A different specialty crop will be featured each month. Each announcement will be run during the nightly news program. WSAM TV was consulted and it was determined that each television announcement would cost \$1,000 to produce (includes research, writing and video production) – Total \$12,000 Production Costs. It will cost \$5,000 per month to run the announcements - total cost - \$60,000. Total cost of the project - \$72,000.

Appendix A contains a price quote from WSAM TV identifying all costs for the project.

Project Partners and Industry Support – Bonus 10 Points

- Are there partners? If, so are commitment letters included indicating how they will work toward the goals and outcome measures of the project.
- Are letters of support from industry organizations or leaders included?