

2011 Specialty Crop Block Grant Questions

Q: Is the production and printing of a farm stand guide that promotes New York Specialty crops eligible for funding?

A: Projects designed to promote NYS specialty crops are not eligible. According to the Section 2.2, Project Eligibility, the Department is soliciting proposals for research and grower education.

Q: A local not-for-profit corporation is exploring this grant, and was wondering if they would qualify. They are building a hoop house and will be selling the vegetables to local markets, and through a farmers' market. They are hoping this grant could be used to help the project grow.

A: Based upon the information provided, it does not appear that the project is eligible for funding. According to Section 2.2 of the RFP, the Department is soliciting proposals that *solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops*, and benefit the greatest number of beneficiaries in the priority area outlined below. This priority was formulated based on input the Department collected from the State's specialty crop organizations, associations, and other industry stakeholders.

Research and Grower Education

Examples of research and grower education projects include, but are not limited to:

- Research and/or extension that address a key conventional or organic production problem or need, specific to New York State;
- Prioritizing and addressing native and exotic pest and disease threats through development of pest risk assessments;
- Supporting plant breeding for the development of specialty crops resistant to exotic and native pests;
- Applied research and development to extend the growing season of New York specialty crops through new technologies, improved management practices, or other innovative production strategies;
- Developing new seed varieties and specialty crops with optimal performance under New York State conditions;
- Developing and increasing the utilization of Integrated Pest Management strategies and programs;
- Research and/or extension leading to the production and manufacture of safe, high quality fruit, vegetable, and other fresh and/or value-added specialty crop products;
- Education or implementation of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems or other preventative food safety controls.

Q: I am a sole proprietor of a farm, and live in an area where sugar maples are disappearing. I want to apply for a grant to enhance my maple trees and research productive ways to enhance these trees. We do produce maple syrup. Do I qualify as an applicant for the 2011 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program?

A: According to the RFP, only not-for-profit (NFP) organizations, not-for-profit educational institutions, and State, local, and Indian tribal governments are eligible to apply for funding. The Department strongly encourages collaborative efforts between NFP's, educational institutions, and government applicants and private for-profits, in order to achieve the goals and objectives of this program. **For-profits are not eligible; however, for-profits may partner with not-for-profits, provided that the NFP is the lead applicant.** Applicants must include commitment letters from any project partners.

Q: I was successfully funded by the 2010 Specialty Crop program for 1 year of a continuing project. The work we are doing has been very well received. We have already had about 15-20 growers ask us to continue our work for another year so that they can partner with us in 2011-12. Would it be appropriate to re-apply to Specialty Crop this year?

A: Projects funded under previous SCBG funding rounds that propose to continue research are eligible to apply for funding under the current solicitation. It will be necessary to state how the proposed continuation will not duplicate work previously completed.