

New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets

2014 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Deadline for Questions – April 10, 2014

Q1: Are processed products eligible (e.g. wine and grape juice)?

A: Processed specialty crop products are eligible as long as greater than 50% of the product, by weight, is constituted of specialty crops (exclusive of added water).

Q2: I am researching applying for a Specialty Crop Block Grant, but could not find a request for proposals on the web at the NYS grants website. Can you send me the RFP?

A: The RFP and application can be found at <http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/RFPS.html>

Q3: Is *camellia sinensis* (tea) considered a specialty crop?

A: Specialty crops are defined as “fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture).” To be eligible, they must be cultivated/managed and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification. Tea leaves are specifically listed under horticulture on the list of eligible crops on the USDA website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateJ&page=SCBGPDefinitions> because they meet this definition.

Q4: Do I understand the process correctly in that the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets would apply directly to the USDA for grant funds through the Specialty Crop Block Grants Program?

A: Yes, the Department of Agriculture & Markets will submit an application to USDA’s Agriculture Marketing Service. The application will include those projects selected for funding through the competitive ranking process, as described on page 10 of the RFP. Funding is dependent upon approval of USDA.

Q5: As an individual, would I register on the Grants Gateway via a Substitute W-9 form? If that is correct, where would I go from there?

A: Any questions regarding the Grants Gateway should be directed to GrantsReform@budget.ny.gov.

Q6: I am interested in applying for a grant to alleviate some of the expenses associated with my internship project. I have already invested money into seed and some other minor supplies. Would I qualify for a grant that would help me cover the rest of my expenses?

A: You should review the Specialty Crop Block Grant Request for Proposals (RFP) requirements to determine if your project is eligible. <http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/RFPS.html>. As stated on page 5 of the RFP, grant funds will not be awarded for projects that solely benefit a particular commercial product or provide a profit to a single organization, institution or individual. Single organizations, institutions and individuals are encouraged to participate as project partners.

Q7: I am in the process of building a beef jerky company. Is beef jerky eligible through this program?

A: The United States Department of Agriculture and Markets defines what are eligible specialty crops for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateJ&navID=WhatareSpecialtyCrops?&rightNav1=WhatareSpecialtyCrops?&topNav=&leftNav=CommodityAreas&page=SCBGPDefinitions&resultType=&acct=fvgrntprg>

Livestock products are not an eligible for this program.

Q8: As a small business owner and new to the process, could you advise as to the process in applying for a grant to assist us in maple production?

A: You should review the Specialty Crop Block Grant Request for Proposals (RFP) requirements to determine if your project will be eligible. <http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/RFPS.html>. As stated on page 5 of the RFP, grant funds will not be awarded for projects that solely benefit a particular commercial product or provide a profit to a single organization, institution or individual. Single organizations, institutions and individuals are encouraged to participate as project partners.

Q9: According to the USDA list, turfgrass is listed as an eligible specialty crop. Does this include turf end-use/management (e.g. golf courses and home lawns) or just production (i.e. sod farms)?

A: Turf end use/management is eligible as long as the project leads to increased industry profitability and sales for producers.

Q10: The RFP mentions an Application Template but I cannot find it.

A: The Application Template can be found at <http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/RFPS.html> (underneath the link to the RFP).

Q11: I'm interested in chatting about the Specialty Crop Block Grant and some specific ideas that my organization has. Could we plan a time to have a phone conversation in the near-term future?

A: Because the Department's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program awards funds through a competitive solicitation process, I am prohibited from discussing specific projects or answering questions other than in writing. I would suggest you review the 2014 Request for Proposals, which is currently open and may be found at www.agriculture.ny.gov/RFPS.html. If you still have questions after reviewing the RFP, please provide your question in writing.

IMPORTANT CHANGE THIS YEAR -- The State of New York has implemented a new statewide prequalification process designed to facilitate prompt contracting for not-for-profit vendors. All applicants that intend to submit a proposal ***must prequalify prior to*** submitting a proposal at <https://grantsgateway.ny.gov>.

To learn more about the prequalification process go to the Grants Reform website at <https://www.grantsreform.ny.gov/Grantees>.

