

2009 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Questions and Answers

1. **Q – What does it mean that funds can not be awarded to projects that solely benefit a single organization, institution or individual? Does that mean that a farmer cooperative or commodity association can not apply?**

A – A single organization may apply; however the project needs to benefit more than one farm or individual. For example, an organization that wants to market cabbage is eligible to apply; however, the proposal must show how the proposed marketing activities will increase the competitiveness of cabbage to the community and/or other farmers in the State. It is important to keep in mind that ranking of projects will be based in part on the number of people or operations affected and potential economic impact (see Rating Sheet, Attachment 1 in the Request for Proposals)

2. **Q – If a project will benefit a wide range of agricultural products, including some that are specialty crops and some that are not (e.g. dairy) would it be eligible?**

A – Grant funds may ONLY be used to benefit eligible specialty crops. In the event that a project also benefits other ineligible commodities, the applicant must describe how they will ensure that grant funding is being used to enhance the specialty crop portion of the project and how non-grant funds will cover the non-specialty crop portion. The description should include the estimated percentage of the project that specifically benefits specialty crops and non-specialty crops. Applicants will be required to maintain adequate documentation to support this requirement.

3. **Q – Will priority be given to certain funding categories? Am I at a disadvantage if I choose a category that the Department receives a lot of projects for compared to another category?**

A – Priority will NOT be given to certain funding categories. The purpose of the funding categories is to provide guidance to applicants regarding industry identified priority areas as well as to streamline the review process. All projects will be scored based on the same funding criteria and will be competing with all other proposals submitted.

4. **Q – Is rental of a vehicle an eligible expense?**

A – Yes, subject to certain restrictions. Please refer to the Federal Cost Principles applicable to your particular organization/entity. The Cost Principles can be found at the website listed in section 3.1 of the RFP (see page 10).

5. **Q – Are “unique” distribution partnerships or networks eligible projects?**

A – Given that all other applicant, project and budget eligibility requirements are met, distribution projects of various types will be considered. See page 6 of RFP.

6. **Q – Working with Cornell Cooperative Extension is provided as an example in the RFP as a way to publicize the findings. Are there other acceptable ways to document and disseminate information, such as presenting at relevant meetings and conferences?**

A – Yes, other methods to share the project outcomes and document the potential impact will be considered as part of the review and ranking process. The example cited

on page 5 of the RFP is just one example of a method of publicizing findings to ensure that the project benefits more than a single organization, institution or individual.

7. Q -- Are indirect costs eligible for this program?

A – No, indirect costs are not allowed.

8. Q – Are proposals focusing on New York wine production eligible?

A – Yes, as provided at the USDA specialty crop block grant website (www.ams.usda.gov/scbqp), wine is an eligible specialty crop.

9. Q – Is honey an eligible specialty crop?

A – Yes, as provided at the USDA specialty crop block grant website (www.ams.usda.gov/scbqp), honey is an eligible specialty crop.

10. Q – Are faxed letters of support from industry members acceptable?

A – Yes, provided such letters are included with the complete application and received by the July 17 deadline.

11. Q – Is construction of a new building an eligible expense?

A –No, capital expenditures for general purpose equipment, buildings, and land are not allowable.

12. Q – The Application Form Instructions state that the margins must be 1 inch; however the form provided does not have 1 inch margins. Are we supposed to change the form to have 1 inch margins?

A – Part A of the Application (Applicant Information) should be completed and submitted in the format provided (as a form). Part B (Project Details) is not intended to be completed as a form; the required information should be submitted on separate sheets formatted as specified in the Instructions. When submitting Part B (Project Details) applicants must follow the formatting requirements, including font size and 1-inch margins.

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