

2014 Specialty Crop Block Grant - Formal Proposal Procedures, Requirements and Checklist

Formal proposals must be submitted in the following format:

- Microsoft Word and PDF (*please submit an original file, not a scanned copy*)
- 11 or 12 point font, Arial or Times New Roman
- 1 inch margins
- Include page numbers and project title at the bottom of each page
- **Do not exceed seven (7) pages, including cover sheet**
- Include support letters with the proposal (not included in the 7 pages)

Formal proposals must be organized according to the following format and projects must address each of the headings below. Proposals that are incomplete and do not satisfy all the requirements are at risk of being disqualified and returned to the proposing organization without review. Proposal deadline is 12:00 p.m. May 12, 2014.

1. Cover Sheet, Project Title and Abstract

- Use the MDA cover sheet
- Project title should adequately describe the project.
- Include a project summary of 250 words or less suitable for dissemination to the public. It should be a self-contained description and include the need for the project, a brief description of the goals and outcomes, and your plan for measuring and evaluating the success of the project or program.

2. Project Purpose and Goals

- What is the specific issue, problem or need that the project will address?
- Why is the project important and timely?
- What are the objectives of the project?
- If any of the project activities or costs has the potential to enhance the competitiveness of non-specialty crops (e.g. farmers market, general buy-local, Community Supported Agriculture etc.) describe the methods or processes you will implement to verify all grant funds are expended on activities and costs that only enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops. If you propose a cost-share or match to cover non-specialty crop activities and costs, include the specific costs or contributions proposed to meet the cost-share or match, the source of funding or contributions, and describe how you determined the appropriate amount of cost-share or match and indicate how you will ensure that funding is being used to solely enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops.
- If the project is a continuation of a project that the SCBGP funded previously, describe how the project differs from and builds on the previous project's efforts. Describe also the likelihood of the project becoming self-sustaining and not indefinitely dependent on grant funds. Specifically, provide a summary (3 to 5 sentences per project) of the accomplishments of the previous project that have led you to seek continued funding.
- Has the project been submitted to or funded by another federal or state program? If no, indicate that you have not. If yes, identify the federal and/or state grant program by name and describe how the new project differs from and supplements efforts of the SCBGP and other federal or state grant program, rather than duplicates funding efforts. The SCBGP will not fund duplicative projects.

3. Potential Impact

This section should show how the project benefits the specialty crop industry and/or the public or multiple states rather than a particular commercial product, single organization, institution or individual.

- Who are the specialty crop beneficiaries of the project?
- How many specialty crop beneficiaries will the project impact?
- How will the project affect the specialty crop beneficiaries?
- What is the potential economic impact of the project, if it can be estimated?
- If applicable, how will the project have a multi-state (benefitting two or more states) or national impact

4. Expected Measurable Outcomes

Provide at least one distinct, quantifiable (an actual number, percentage, etc) and MEASURABLE OUTCOME that solely supports enhancing the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops. If the outcome measures are long-term and occur after the project's completion, then identify an intermediate outcome that occurs before the end of the grant period and that is expected to help lead to the fulfillment of long-term outcomes. Examples of outcome measures may include, but are not limited to: per capita consumption, consumer awareness as a percent of target market reached, number of people attending a workshop, market penetration based on sales by geographic region, dollar value exports, or website hits. For research grants, measurable outcomes may include generation of new knowledge, research quality, attainment of leadership in the field, or the development of human resources (e.g. providing opportunities for graduate students). For further information on expected measurable outcomes, please see the USDA [Outcomes Model](#) or this [Educational Bulletin](#).

Provide a GOAL - A goal is what you hope to achieve as a result of conducting the activities and producing the outputs (tangible results that can be seen, touched, handled or moved) of the project. Examples of outcome-oriented goals could include a change in knowledge, behavior or conditions that make a difference for the beneficiaries of the project.

Provide a PERFORMANCE MEASURE - Identify a performance measure for each goal that you will use to measure the actual project results compared to the expected results. These are usually expressed in quantifiable terms and should be objective and measurable (numeric values, percentages, scores and indices, although in certain circumstances qualitative measures are appropriate).

Provide a BENCHMARK - For each performance measure provided, include benchmark. The benchmark is the baseline data against which you will measure your success. Examples of a benchmark could include current or initial level of knowledge, current behavior, or current conditions.

Provide a TARGET - For each benchmark provided, indicate the target. The target is the level of change that you anticipate by the completion of the project. This is NOT the target audience or target population.

Provide your PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN. How will you monitor your progress toward achieving each goal?

What are your data sources for monitoring performance? How will data be collected? For example, will you conduct surveys or use questionnaires? If using a survey, provide information on the nature of the questions that will be asked, the methodology to be used, and the population to be surveyed. If a draft questionnaire is available, you may include a copy.

How will you collect the required data? How will data gathered be used to correct deficiencies and improve performance, both as it is gathered and analyzed and in the future? Be sure to include the frequency of your data collection.

Describe how you will share the results of the project with specialty crop growers and other interested specialty crop stakeholders.

5. Work Plan

Project Activity - Describe the project activities that are necessary to accomplish the objectives. Make sure you include your performance monitoring/data collection activities.	Who will do the work? Indicate the project participants who will do the work of each activity, including sub-recipients, and/or contractors. If you request grant funds for personnel and contractors, you must include them in the work plan to demonstrate the requested funding is warranted. If you request funds for travel, these activities must also be included.	When will the activity be accomplished? Include a timeline that indicates when each activity will occur (at least month and year) and beginning and end dates for the project. Make sure the work plan timeline shows that the project will be completed within the allowable grant period.
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Project Commitment - Describe the specialty crop stakeholders other than the applicant, individuals and organizations involved in the project who support this project and why.

6. Detail Budget and Budget Narrative

All expenses described in this Budget Narrative must be associated with expenses that will be covered by the SCBGP. Describe the expenses to be covered with matching funds separately. If matching funds are proposed as a mechanism to ensure all grant funds will solely enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops, you must keep adequate records to identify and document the specific costs or contributions proposed to meet the match or cost-share, the source of funding or contributions, and document how the valuation was determined.

Allowable Costs and Activities – Page 7 – [SCBGP General Award Terms and Conditions](#)

Budget Summary	
Expense Category	Funds Requested
Personnel	
Fringe Benefits	
Travel	
Equipment	
Supplies	
Contractual	
Other	
Direct Costs Subtotal	
	Total Budget

- **Personnel** - List the organization's employees whose time and effort can be specifically identified and easily and accurately traced to project activities that solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Those employed elsewhere would be listed as subcontractors or consultants, and listed in the Contractual section.

For secretarial and clerical salaries to be allowable as direct charges to the grant, a justification of how that person will be directly involved in the project must be included in the narrative. General administrative or accounting duties are not considered acceptable. The duties must be directly related to the project plan. For each project participant, indicate their title, percent of full-time equivalent (FTE), and corresponding salary for the FTE.

The total of Personnel Expenses + Fringe Benefits cannot exceed \$5000.00.

Name/Title	Level of Effort (# of hours OR % FTE)	Funds Requested
Personnel Subtotal		

- **Fringe Benefits** - Provide the fringe benefit rates for each of the project's salaried employees described in the Personnel section that will be paid with SCBGP funds.

The total of Personnel Expenses + Fringe Benefits cannot exceed \$5000.00.

Name/Title	Fringe Benefit Rate	Funds Requested
Fringe Subtotal		

- **Travel** - Explain the purpose for each Trip Request. Please note that travel costs are limited to those allowed by formal organizational policy; in the case of air travel, project participants must use the lowest reasonable commercial airfares. For recipient organizations that have no formal travel policy and for-profit recipients, allowable travel costs may not exceed those established by the Federal Travel Regulation, issued by GSA, including the maximum per diem and subsistence rates prescribed in those regulations. This information is available at <http://www.gsa.gov>.

In-State Travel Requirements through June 30, 2014

- Mileage - 37cents per mile <http://content.oa.mo.gov/accounting/state-employees/travel-portal-information/mileage>
- Motel - up to \$104.00 per night (depending on location) <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120>
- Meals - up to \$50.00 per day in state and up to \$83.00 out of state (depending on location) <http://content.oa.mo.gov/accounting/state-employees/travel-portal-information/state-meals-diem>

Trip Destination	Purpose of the Trip	Type of Expense (airfare, car rental, hotel, meals, mileage, etc.)	Unit of Measure (days, nights, miles)	Number of Units	Cost per Unit	Number of Travelers Claiming the Expense	Funds Requested

(Provide additional justification as needed)

Travel Subtotal	
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- **Equipment** - Describe any special purpose equipment to be purchased or rented under the grant and its intended use. "Special purpose equipment" is tangible, nonexpendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds \$5,000 per unit and is used only for research, medical, scientific, or other technical activities.

If the cost is under \$5,000, include the items under **SUPPLIES**.

Capital expenditures for general purpose equipment, buildings, and land are unallowable as direct and indirect charges.

Capital expenditures for special purpose equipment are allowable as direct costs, provided that items with a unit cost of \$5,000 or more have the prior approval of MDA. The special purpose equipment means equipment which is used only for research, scientific or other technical activities. The special purpose equipment must solely enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops and benefit the specialty crop industry.

Rental of "general purpose equipment" must also be described in this section. Purchase of general purpose equipment is not allowable under this grant.

Rental costs of buildings and equipment are allowable as direct costs in accordance with the cost principles in [Subpart T of 7 CFR 3015](#).

Item Description	Justification for Equipment	Rental or Purchase	Funds Requested
Equipment Subtotal			

- **Supplies** - Provide an itemized list of materials, supplies, and fabricated parts costing less than \$5,000 per unit and describe how they will support the purpose and goal of the proposal and solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

For example, office supplies such as pens, paper, toner, etc - \$500; Gardening supplies such as soil and fertilizer - \$500. Items such as telephone, postage, fax and express mail are more appropriately listed under the "Other" category.

Item Description	Justification for Supplies	Per-Unit Cost	Number of Units/Pieces Purchased	Funds Requested

Supplies Subtotal

- **Contractual/Consultant** - Contractual/consultant costs are the expenses associated with purchasing goods and/or procuring services performed by an individual or organization other than the applicant in the form of a procurement relationship. If there is more than one contractor or consultant, each must be described separately. (Repeat this section for each contract/consultant.)
 - If the contractor/consultant has already been selected, please verify that the State applicant followed the same policies and procedures it uses for procurements from its non-federal sources. For all non-State applicants, please verify that the applicant used its own procurement procedures which reflect applicable State and local laws and regulations and conform to the Federal laws and standards identified in [7 CFR Part 3019.40 through 48](#) or [3016.36](#), as applicable.
 - If a contractor/consultant has not yet been selected, provide an acknowledgement that the procurement processes have not yet been conducted and an assurance that the State applicant will follow the same policies and procedures it uses for procurements from its non-federal sources. For all non-State applicants, provide an acknowledgement that the procurement processes have not yet been conducted, and an assurance that the applicant will use its own procurement procedures which reflect applicable State and local laws and regulations and conform to the Federal law and standards identified in [7 CFR Part 3019.40 through 48](#) or [3016.36](#), as applicable.
 - Please note - grant funds may not be used for administrative overhead also applies to contractors and consultants.
 - Provide an itemized budget (personnel, fringe, travel, equipment, supplies, other, etc.) with appropriate justification.
 - Contractor/consultant rates shall not exceed hourly rate of \$71.80 up to \$500 per eight-hour day, excluding travel and subsistence costs.

Contractual/Consultant Subtotal

- **Other** - Include any expenses not covered in the previous budget categories. Be sure to break down costs into cost/unit. Expenses in this section include, but are not limited to, meetings and conferences, communications, rental expenses, advertisements, publication costs and data collection.

If you budget meal costs for reasons other than meals associated with travel per diem, provide an adequate justification to support that these costs are not entertainment costs.

Item Description	Justification of the Expense	Per-Unit Cost	Number of Units	Funds Requested

<i>Other Subtotal</i>	
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- **Administrative Overhead** - Grant funds may not be used for administrative overhead.
- **Program Income** - Program income is gross income - earned by a recipient or subrecipient under a grant - directly generated by the grant-supported activity, or earned only because of the grant agreement during the grant period of performance. Program income includes, but is not limited to, income from fees for services performed; the sale of commodities or items fabricated under an award (this includes items sold at cost if the cost of producing the item was funded in whole or partially with grant funds); registration fees for conferences, etc.

Source/Nature of Program Income	Description of how you will reinvest the program income into the project to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops	Estimated Income

<i>Program Income Total</i>	
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7. Project Oversight Describe the oversight practices that provide sufficient knowledge of grant activities to ensure proper and efficient administration.

8. Project Commitment Describe how all grant partners commit to and work toward the goals and outcome measures of the proposed project. Identify who supports this project.

Grant Administration

MDA applies the following federal grant uniform administrative requirements to the management of each grant award. A link is provided to each of these documents.

- State and Local Governments and Indian Tribal Governments - [7 CFR 3015](#) and [7 CFR 3016](#)

- Colleges and Universities - [7 CFR 3015](#) and [7 CFR 3019](#)
- Non-Profits - [7 CFR 3015](#) and [7 CFR 3019](#)
- For Profits - [7 CFR 3015](#) and [7 CFR 3019](#)
- Audits of State, Local Governments, and Non-profit Organizations - [7 CFR 3052](#)

Eligible Expenditures

All awards are subject to those cost principles applicable to the particular organization. For example, if a state government sub-awards to a university, the cost principles applicable to a university will apply. Please refer to the applicable cost principles when developing project activities and budget.

Reference Appendix A - [List of Selected items of Cost Contained in OMB Cost Principles Regulations](#) to locate the principles applied in establishing the eligibility or ineligibility of specific terms of cost. All costs must be associated with project activities that enhance the competitiveness of specialty 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, student tuition and fees, any expenses incurred prior to the award date of this grant, personal labor and expenses, and political or lobbying activities. No administrative 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.

Records Requirements

The grantee will be responsible for setting up and maintaining a project file that contains all records of correspondence with MDA, 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. Financial records, statistical records, supporting documents, and other records relevant to the award shall be retained for a period of three years from submission of the Final Report.

Reporting

Grantees are required to submit written performance reports quarterly and annually to MDA detailing the project status and how grant monies were used. Upon completion of project a final, comprehensive report is due. Reporting requirements will be detailed in the award agreement. MDA must report each action that obligates \$25,000 or more in SCBGP funds for a grant to an entity, which is defined in [2 CFR Part 25, subpart C](#), to <http://www.fsrs.gov> in accordance with the FFATA.

Monitoring

MDA reserves the right 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.

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 Missouri Department of Agriculture and the USDA's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program."*

MDA reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals received;
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification and agreement of applicant;
- Provide partial funding for specific proposal components that may be less than the formal amount requested in the grant application;
- Require a good faith effort from the project organization or sponsor to work with MDA subsequent to project completion to develop reporting data or implement the project results, where applicable;
- Withhold any payments that do not meet grant conditions;
- Require return or refund of grant monies used for expenditures that are not allowed or unauthorized.

Grantees agree to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, codes, regulations, rules, and orders. The grant will be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Missouri.

Grantees will be accountable for all grant funds awarded. Grantees shall maintain records, receipts, accounting procedures and practices sufficient to reflect all costs claimed to have been incurred for the performance of the grant agreement. Interim and final reports shall document all grant expenditures.

2014 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Full Proposal Checklist

For more detailed information on what to include in each section, refer to the instructions above in *Formal Proposal Procedures and Requirements*. The total proposal should not be more than 7 pages, including the cover sheet. Please sign the Microsoft Word or PDF version of the Cover Page and submit it along with the 7-page proposal to Susan.Bennett@mda.mo.gov by 12:00 noon May 12, 2014.

- MDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Cover Sheet and Abstract
- Project Purpose
- Potential Impact
- Expected Measurable Outcomes
- Work Plan
- Detail Budget and Budget Narrative - (Grant funds may not be used for administrative overhead.)
- Project Oversight
- Project Commitment
- Multi-State Projects

Contact Information

For questions regarding the submission of the full proposal, please contact Susan Bennett at (573) 526-9548 or Susan.Bennett@mda.mo.gov.

Mailing Address:

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