

John Boyle
Commissioner

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Department of
Natural Resources

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

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Specialty Crop Grant Applications Are Open

(Palmer, AK) – Alaskans can apply for Specialty Crop Block Grants of up to \$60,000 to support Alaska specialty crops under a federal program provided by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service and administered by the Alaska Division of Agriculture.

The grant program seeks to enhance the competitiveness of Alaska Grown specialty crops, sustain farmers' livelihoods, and strengthen local communities. Grants are available in two categories, with smaller grants targeting entry-level or investigative projects, and larger grants aimed at more evidence-based research projects or those building on previous projects with strong industry support.

Grant applicants must provide a Letter of Intent to the Division by 5 p.m. on Feb. 9, 2024.

The Request for Proposals, including application and deadline information, is at:

https://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_grants/specialty_crop_block_grant.htm.

Only projects related to specialty crops are allowed under this funding source. Potential recipients might include universities, extension services, soil and water conservation districts, or schools working in cooperation with a business or non-profit. Eligible projects include projects focused on enhancing food safety, improving capacity in the specialty crop distribution chain, specialty crop research, development of new and improved varieties, pest and disease control, increasing child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops, improving efficiency and reducing costs, and sustainability.

Alaska specialty crop producers or industry stakeholders are invited to provide input on this year's top funding priorities, please complete this survey by March 1: [2024 SCBG Funding Priorities Survey](#)

Grant projects must benefit the specialty crop industry as a whole and enhance the competitiveness of U.S. grown specialty crops in either domestic or foreign markets. Projects that benefit a particular commercial product or provide a profit to a single business, organization, or individual will be deemed ineligible for funding. The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines specialty crops as fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and horticulture, nursery crops, kelp, and sea vegetables. Livestock, dairy, fuel/feed grains, hay, and other aquaculture are excluded from this program due to USDA restrictions but may qualify for

[other Division of Agriculture grant opportunities](https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp/specialty-crop). A list of USDA-eligible specialty crops is at: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp/specialty-crop>

Media Contact: Amanda Swanson, dnr.ag.grants@alaska.gov with “media inquiry” in subject line; 907-761-3885

The Department of Natural Resources' mission is to develop, conserve, and maximize the use of Alaska's natural resources consistent with the public interest.

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