NY farm viability INSTITUTE

Request for Proposals

2020 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program New York State

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The New York Farm Viability Institute

The New York Farm Viability Institute (NYFVI) is an independent and incorporated nonprofit organization, led by farmers and dedicated to helping farms of all sizes, sectors, production practices and locations in New York State. NYFVI works to foster a vibrant agricultural economy in New York by supporting applied research, outreach education, information transfer, adoption of technology, business planning, market analysis and more. The New York Farm Viability Institute promotes practical solutions to challenges facing New York's farmers.

In addition to NYFVI's core competitive grant program, NYFVI is supporting New York State's Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDAM) by managing the competitive grant program portion of New York State's USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.

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2020 New York State Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

General Information

Legislative Authority for USDA Funding

Legislative authority is provided under section 101 of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 (7 U.S.C. 1621 note) and amended under section 10010 of the Agricultural Act of 2014, Public Law 113-79 (the Farm Bill). SCBGP is currently implemented under 7 CFR part 1291 (published March 27, 2009; 74 FR 13313).

Purpose

New York's specialty crop agricultural and food systems industry is a valuable component of our State's economy, the environment, residents' health, and quality of life. The purpose of New York's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program is to enhance the competitiveness of New York specialty crops by creating partnerships; fostering innovation; increasing efficiencies and reducing costs; and enhancing the long term viability of New York's specialty crop agricultural businesses and food systems.

Definition of Specialty Crops

For the purpose of this RFP, "specialty crops" means fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and nursery crops (including floriculture). A detailed list of commonly recognized specialty crops is provided in Appendix A.

Available Funding

It is anticipated that there may be approximately $600,000 available through NYFVI for the competitive grant portion of the 2020 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Funding is contingent upon the award of funds to the NYSDAM by the USDA. Final grant awards will be made upon final approval of the NYSDAM application to the USDA.

Applicant Eligibility

Eligible applicants include:

- Not-for-profit organizations (NFP)
- Not-for-profit educational institutions
- Local and Indian tribal governments

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.

Projects should have general applicability and statewide significance to the specialty crop industry.

NYFVI strongly encourages collaborative efforts between NFPs, educational institutions, government applicants and private for profits in order to achieve the goals and objectives of this program. For profits

are not eligible applicants; however, for profits may partner with not-for-profits provided that the NFP is the lead applicant.

Project Eligibility and Priorities

NYFVI is soliciting proposals that *solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops* and benefit the greatest number of beneficiaries. The New York Specialty Crop Block Grant Advisory Committee, composed of farmer members of specialty crop organizations and associations, and other industry stakeholders, recommended a focus on specialty crop research and grower education. The following priority areas were identified by the Advisory Committee.

Specialty Crop Research and Grower Education

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

- research and/or education that address a key conventional or organic production problem or need specific to New York State;
- developing and increasing the utilization of Integrated Pest Management strategies and programs;
- prioritizing and addressing native and exotic pests 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;

Projects that support the increase of fruits and vegetables in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by providing incentives at the point of purchase and/or include technologies for benefit redemption systems should consider submitting those projects to the *Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Grants Program* at https://nifa.usda.gov/program/food-insecurity-nutrition-incentive-fini-grant-program

Projects that support domestic farmers' markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, other direct producer-to consumer market opportunities, local and regional food business enterprises that process, distribute, aggregate, or store locally or regionally produced food products should consider submitting those projects to the *Farmers' Market Promotion Program* at https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/fmpp and *Local Food Promotion Program* at http://www.ams.usda.gov/lfpp.

Projects that support biobased products and bioenergy and energy programs, including biofuels and other alternative uses for agricultural and forestry commodities (development of biobased products) should see the USDA energy website at https://www.usda.gov/energy/matrix/home for information on how to submit those projects for consideration to the energy programs supported by USDA.

Project Duration and Costs

Projects must be completed within 2 years from the award date. Funding requests for individual projects must be between $50,000 and $100,000.

Eligible costs include: personnel, fringe benefits, travel, special purpose equipment, supplies, and contractual costs and services directly related to an eligible project. Indirect cost are allowed at a rate not to exceed the federal maximum of 8% of the grant amount requested. Indirect costs are any costs incurred for common or joint objectives that therefore, cannot be readily identified with an individual eligible project, program, or activity. Indirect costs generally include facilities operation and maintenance costs, depreciation and general administrative expenses.

Ineligible costs include: political activities, lobbying activities, capital expenditures for general purpose equipment, buildings, and land, and any activities that support non-specialty crops. General purpose equipment means equipment that is not limited to research, scientific or other technical activities. Examples include office equipment and furnishings, motor vehicles, etc.

This USDA document provides more detailed information on eligible and ineligible costs.

NYFVI shall not be held liable for any costs incurred by any party for work performed in the preparation of and production of a proposal or for any work performed prior to the formal execution of a contract.

Developing Your Application

Start With the End in Mind

One goal of the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program is to create meaningful impact at the farm level. Think about the change you would like to see on farms as a result of your project. What will be different, improved, better? Now work backward from there. In order to achieve that desired improvement, what will specialty crop farmers need to do differently? What management practices, technologies, or methods will need to be changed or modified on the farm? Make a list of all these things you will need farmers to, change, implement, or do differently. In order to get farmers to make those changes what will you need to do as the project leader? This list of activities will become your work plan.

Answers to these questions will be used to guide the development of the Performance Targets, Milestones, and Activities section of the application. To achieve the desired farm level impacts it is important that applicants devote considerable thought to this aspect of the application, which is discussed in more detail on page 10 of this RFP.

Project Impact Data

NYFVI has created a list of farm and industry-level project impacts that must be recorded when applicable. Recording these data will assist you in documenting the importance of your work to NYFVI, the public, and to potential future funding sources. Be sure to keep these in mind as you develop your proposal, and to include in your proposal information about which of these data you will record, and how.

Impact Data

Producer Involvement

- Number of producers participating
- Number of producers advising

Job Creation and Retention

- New full-time jobs
- New part-time jobs
- New seasonal jobs
- Retained full-time jobs
- Retained part-time jobs
- Research/extension jobs retained

Financial Impact

- Increase in gross revenue
- New gross savings
- New capital investment
- Potential industry impact

Outreach

- Articles and publications
- Presentations (<3 hours)
- In-depth workshops (>3 hours)

Leveraged or matching funds

- Leveraged funds
- Matching funds

Program Income

Contractor shall report any program income earned as a result of the project. Program income shall be used in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200.80, 7 CFR 3019.24 or 7 CFR 3016.25.

Program income is gross income—earned by a contractor under a grant—directly generated by the grant-supported activity, or earned only as a result of the grant agreement during the grant period. 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 with grant funds); registration fees for conferences, workshops, field days, etc. If the Contractor is other than a Federal agency, royalties or equivalent income earned from patents, inventions, trademarks, and copyrighted works is not subject to this section.

If program income is to be earned during the Agreement, it must be pre-approved by the NYFVI and Ag. & Markets, and used for one or more of the following:

1) Expanding the project or program;
2) Continuing the project or program after the grant or subgrant support ends; and/or
3) Supporting other projects or programs that further enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops.

Apply Online

To apply for funding, applicants must use the NYFVI online application system at http://db.nyfvi.org. Funded project leaders will use the same online system for quarterly progress reporting and final project reporting.

Please note that, when first using the online application system, you must apply for system credentials. Staff will then activate your username and password. Keep this in mind when applying, as staff processing of credentials can take several days.

Risk Assessment

Applicants should be advised that if their project is selected for funding, the applicant organization will undergo a formal risk assessment based on standards adopted by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. This assessment will ensure applicants are financially responsible and have had no prior issues in their state contracting history or federal grant performance history. The assessment will also determine whether the applicant has had prior audit findings and evaluate the funding characteristics of the currently approved project. Applicants that are deemed to be 'high risk' based on factors in the assessment linked below, may or may not be awarded SCBG funding, even if their proposal scores highly among reviewers. Please click the following link to view the risk assessment guidelines.

2020 New York State Specialty Crop Block Grant Application Format

Key Dates:
Monday, January 13, 2020 SCBG grant writing webinar 9:30am-11:00 am
Wednesday, January 15, 2020 SCGB Grant writing webinar 1:00pm-2:30 pm

Sunday, February 9, 2020 - Applications due by 11:59 pm
May 2020– Successful applicants contacted.
October 2020 – Anticipated Grant Awards Announcement by USDA (projects must not begin prior to award announcement.)
December 31, 2022 – All projects must be completed before this date

Applicants must file all internal paperwork, receive any permission, grant office numbers, or other requirements of your employer, prior to submitting an application; failure to do so may make applications ineligible for funding considerations.

*The online application assumes the person under whose credentials the application is being submitted is the project leader. The project leader is the person with central administrative and managerial responsibility for the project. This is the individual who is **ultimately responsible** for the project's work. For NYFVI's purposes, there may be only **one** project leader. (There may be multiple co-leaders).*

If you plan on first creating your proposal in a word processing program like MS Word, we request that, prior to copying and pasting into our online application, you first copy and paste into a plain text editor, such as Notepad. This will eliminate a great deal of coding that comes along (invisibly) from Word. This hidden code can create problems, and also adds to the character count in sections where text is limited.

TITLE, DURATION
Title: Create a title for the project. Keep in mind the title of the project will appear in NYFVI publications. Generally, a title that is brief but descriptive of the project and its goals, works best. Limited to 150 characters.

Duration: Indicate the start and end date for your project. Projects up to eight quarters in duration will be considered. Projects must start after October 1, 2020, and all projects must be completed by December 31, 2022.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROGRAM/RFP
Indicate the grant program through which you are seeking funds. The Specialty Crop Block Grant program is abbreviated as SCG in the NYFVI database.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION SECTOR
Indicate the agricultural sectors represented in the project by participating producers/farmers. Selected sectors **must** be limited to eligible specialty crops only.

EMPHASIS/PORTFOLIO PRIORITIES
Please indicate which of the following NYFVI priority areas most closely aligns with the intent of your project. If absolutely necessary, a second priority can be selected as well. More extensive definitions of these emphasis areas can be seen in the online application form or at www.NYFVI.org

- Improvement of individual specialty crop operations
- Industry-wide innovation

- Early development of new ideas and methods
- Improved marketing practices and market access
- Development of human capital

ANTICIPATED RESULTS
Please select the outcome(s) you believe your project will deliver. *Note: your project should be able to provide impact data appropriate for your selection.*

CONTACTS
NYFVI collects names and contact information from all individuals associated with a project. Please read the descriptions below to ensure you are categorizing the participants correctly.

Note: The producer section and other collaborators section both include a check box area where an applicant certifies that ***all individuals listed have discussed and agreed to participate in the project.*** *Applicants should* ***not*** *include the names of any individuals that have not clearly agreed to participate. All names that are provided may be contacted about the project at any point.*

Contractor: Provide the name and contact information of the person responsible for grant contracts within your organization. In most cases this is not the same person as the project leader. This is the person who will sign the contract.

Administrative Point of Contact: Provide the name and contact information for the person who will handle invoicing, record keeping, and related aspects of the project. This is an optional designee, and should be someone familiar with the project leader and proposal who can be consulted when the project leader is unavailable.

Specialty Crop Producers: Enter the names and contact information of farmers**--and only farmers--** who are actively providing assistance in the proposed project.

Check the appropriate box or boxes to indicate how the producer is participating. Choices include co-leader, proposal development, project advisory committee, project implementation, outreach and/or evaluation.

Grant applicants are not required to identify the farmers who will be implementing the project during the application phase of the project. However, competitive proposals will demonstrate farm-level support for their efforts, including farmer participation in the project planning process. If a farmer is indicated as participating in "project implementation", then the project will be implemented on their farm and it is expected that project impact data will be collected and reported for that farm.

If your work is focused on applied research, your application will be greatly strengthened by having identified farms for project implementation.

If necessary, anonymity of farmer participants in tracking project progress may be permitted. For more information, contact NYFVI staff.

Do not include the names of project participants who are not farmers in this section. Do not include more than one name entry per farm.

Other Participants & Collaborators: Provide the name and contact information for all other individuals that will be supporting the project in this section. These may include technicians, extension educators, consultants and other agribusiness professionals.

Check the appropriate box or boxed to indicate how the individual is participating. Choices include co-leader, proposal development, project advisory committee, project implementation, project staff, outreach and/or evaluation.

PRODUCER INVOLVEMENT *(Character Limit: 1,500)*

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that farmers are, and/or will be, actively involved in each aspect of the project. It is NOT necessary to provide your full implementation and outreach plans here, just provide detail about how **farmers** will be participating.

Proposal Development: Describe specifically how, when, and where specialty crop **farmers**, including the number of farmers, were involved in developing the proposal**.**

Project Advisory Committee: Some project leaders use Advisory Committees in their project. These committees may be informal or formal and may be an existing group or sub-group or a group gathered for the purpose of the project. These committees may be wholly comprised of specialty crop farmers or a mix that includes non-farmers. If a Project Advisory Committee is used, describe the committee's makeup, number of participating **farmers**, purpose, meeting schedule and role it will have in the project.

Project Implementation: Specialty crop farmers that will implement the project on their farm are those for whom project leaders will track and report on change and project impact in the quarterly reports and final report of the funded project. In this section, provide a brief narrative of how **farmers** will implement the project and the planned measurement of progress.

Project Outreach: Provide a brief description of how specialty crop **farmers** will be part of the plan to share information and educated other farmers.

Project Evaluation: How will farmers participate in evaluating the project? Possibilities include providing farm financial data; feedback through testimonials or surveys; assessment of materials developed through the project, such as fact sheets, how-to guides, etc.; assessment of research data or project results; review by project advisory committee; review by local board of directors; and more.

TARGET BENEFICIARIES *(Character Limit: 1,500)*

Use specifics to describe the target audience for this project. Numbers help build the case for the value of the work proposed and demonstrate a thorough understanding of the audience for outreach. Consider including:

- commodities, sectors, enterprises, groups and sub-groups involved,
- geographical region and reach,
- farm size,
- types of production systems.

IDENTIFICATION OF BARRIERS *(Character Limit: 1,500)*

This section should focus on building an understanding of the specifics and scale of the problem your work will solve, or the economic opportunity your work will help create. Be sure to include specifics on how you know this problem is important to specialty crop farmers. Do not discuss the solution in this section.

Grant applicants may cite barriers and opportunities identified by NYFVI through its efforts. Applicants may also cite other sources.

Other methods of identifying needs and opportunities for your project include, producer groups assembled specifically to develop this project, an agricultural organization's strategic planning or needs

assessment document, program councils, producer program committees, focus groups, and program advisory committees.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION *(Character Limit: 3,200)*
Describe the overarching, long-range goals or outcomes of this project and the potential impact on New York specialty crop agriculture, connect it to the problem or opportunity described in the previous section.

Include a synopsis of previous research and outreach efforts at the local, state, national or international level. The synopsis should focus on the level of applicability, awareness or comprehension of earlier work within New York State or its regions. Detail how your proposed project builds on existing knowledge or previous efforts. Reviewers frequently comment "this work has already been done" or "there is nothing new in this proposal". This is your opportunity to address those concerns.

PERFORMANCE TARGETS, MILESTONES, AND ACTIVITIES *(No Character Limit)*
This section should provide a detailed work plan for your project. Typically, projects will have numerous measureable milestones and activities all to achieve a relatively small number of performance targets.

Performance Targets: The performance target is the primary goal/s of the project. How will the farm 'perform' differently as a result of the project? What will the project achieve, as measured on participating farms? Priority in funding decisions goes to proposals whose performance targets are measurable within the duration of the grant funds. If goals will be achieved after the contract period ends, then what measurements can be made during the period of the project that shows progress toward achieving the desired goal? Indicate the process to measure these long-term results in the Evaluation Plan section of the application.

In order to standardize reporting and aggregation of results, USDA is requiring that each funded project select one or more "Outcomes" from a list of 8, along with one or more "Indicators" associated with each Outcome. USDA uses different terminology to refer to what are Performance Targets and Milestones in NYFVI's system. Of the 8 items on USDA's list, only two are appropriate for the projects that will be funded through the NYFVI competitive grant program. Those two items are listed below as Option A and Option B.

In addition to any other Performance Targets and Milestones you would like to include in your application**, applicants <u>MUST</u> choose option A or B below, or if appropriate both. Plus one or more associated milestones.**

**Option A and/or Option B must be included as one of your Performance Targets (please copy and paste the text right out of this RFP):*

Option A: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through greater capacity of sustainable practices of specialty crop production resulting in increased yield, reduced inputs, increased efficiency, increased economic return, and/or conservation of resources.

Option B: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through sustainable, diverse, and resilient specialty crop systems.

Milestones: For each performance target, list the milestones that you will track, measure and report on during the course of the project. Think of milestones as sub-goals, the means by which you will verify progress toward achieving each performance target.

Again, in addition to any additional milestones you may wish to specify, **it is required that all funded projects select one or more of USDA's prescribed milestones** listed under the Performance target

option(s) you selected.

**Please choose at least one of the corresponding milestones to include in your proposal:*

Milestones for Performance Target Option A:

1. *Numbers of plant/seed releases (i.e. cultivars, drought-tolerant plants, organic, enhanced nutritional composition, etc.)* _____
2. *Adoption of best practices and technologies resulting in increased yields, reduced inputs, increased efficiency, increased economic return, and conservation of resources (select at least one below).*
    a. *Number of growers/producers indicating adoption of recommended practices* _____
    b. *Number of growers/producers reporting reduction in pesticides, fertilizer, water used/acre* _____
    c. *Number of producers reporting increased dollar returns per acre or reduced costs per acre* _____
    d. *Number of acres in conservation tillage or acres in other best management practices* _____
3. *Number of habitat acres established and maintained for the mutual benefit of pollinators and specialty crops* _____

Milestones for Performance Target Option B:

1. *Number of new or improved innovation models (biological, economic, business, management, etc.), technologies, networks, products, processes etc. developed for specialty crop entities including producers, processers, distributors, etc.* _____
2. *Number of innovations adopted* _____
3. *Number of specialty crop growers/producers (and other members of the specialty crop supply chain) that have increased revenue expressed in dollars* _____
4. *Number of new diagnostic systems analyzing specialty crop pests and diseases.* _____ *[Diagnostic systems refer to, among other things: labs networks, procedures, access points.]*
5. *Number of new diagnostic technologies available for detecting plant pests and diseases.* ___ *[The intent here is not to count the individual pieces of equipment or devices, but to enumerate technologies that add to the diagnostic capacity.]*
6. *Number of first responders trained in early detection and rapid response to combat plant pests and diseases* _____
7. *Number of viable technologies/processes developed or modified that will increase specialty crop distribution and/or production* _____
8. *Number of growers/producers that gained knowledge about science-based tools through outreach and education programs* _____

Activities: For each milestone, list the activities you will engage in that will help to achieve the milestone.

After adding each new Performance Target, Milestone, or Activity (and date), you must click the "Add" button just to the left of the statement. Failure to click "Add" will result in lost data.

OUTREACH PLAN *(Character Limit: 1,500)*

Describe how the information generated or knowledge gained through this project will be accessible and

actionable for the broader agricultural producer audience across New York State. As you develop the outreach plan, consider how you might measure its effectiveness in changing practices on farms, include this information in the Evaluation Plan.

EVALUATION PLAN (Character Limit: 1,500)

Applicant must develop an evaluation plan based on impact at the farm level, relative to project performance targets. The plan must focus on how the project measures progress toward the achievement of milestones and performance targets as well as the impacts achieved at the end of the project.

Describe the information you will collect, how you will collect it, and the proposed analysis of the information. Describe how the collected information measures the project's success. Evaluation may include what and why a project, or aspect of the project, worked or failed to work. Think of the evaluation process as an opportunity to provide learning tools to others embarking on their own efforts. Funded project leaders will provide an extensive evaluation as part of the Final Report.

PROJECT TEAM (Character Limit: 750)

Individuals entered in the Contacts sections of the proposal, and designated as Co-Leader or Project Staff, will automatically appear here as part of the Project Team.

For each individual, describe their specific role in the project. While individuals may have a broad range of talents and roles, for this section focus only on their role(s) in this project.

Next describe the qualifications in terms of knowledge, training, skills, or relationships and associations the individual has that will allow them to effectively fulfill their role in the project. Again, individuals may have a broad range of knowledge, skills and qualifications but for this section focus only on qualifications relevant to their role(s) in this project.

PRODUCER IN KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

Itemize the specific contributions farmers will make to this project and estimate a reasonable dollar value for each. To help with data standardization please use $50 per hour as a value for producer time contributed to a project. Contributed items may include, but are not limited to:

- Time committed to various aspects of the project, e.g. development, advisory committee, implementation, outreach, evaluation
- Supplies, e.g. seed, fertilizer, chemicals, feed, fuel
- Use of facilities or equipment
- Use of farmland for research plots or trials
- Sacrifice or donation of crops or material they could have otherwise used or sold

There is no requirement for matching or in-kind contribution and applicants are not required to include Producer In-Kind Contributions. However, reviewers look for it and contributions are seen as a demonstration of farmer support for the project.

After adding each new Contribution and dollar value, you must click the "Add" button just to the left of the statement. Failure to click "Add" will result in lost data.

BUDGET

All costs must be directly associated with project activities that solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. For specific information about eligible and ineligible costs, please review the linked document.

Following are guidelines for completing your budget in the NYFVI online application system. For more detail on eligible and ineligible costs please review this USDA budget document.

Grant applicants will create a quarterly budget for the each quarter of the proposed project. The online application will automatically combine them into annual budgets and a total budget. **Applicants are expected to create quarterly budgets that reflect the project's work plan and expected spending.**

Plan carefully within each budget category. Without exceeding the total grant amount project leaders may only overspend a budget line by 10%. Expenditures beyond these limits will require formal budget modifications.

Salaries and Wages: NYFVI may reimburse expenses for salary, wages and fringe benefits for new or currently employed staff for the portion of staff **time devoted to the funded project**, up to 100% of the employee's time. Employees may not seek reimbursement for the percentage of their time spent working on other projects.

List the employee or employee's title/job description, and the percentage of each employee's time devoted to the proposed project in the Budget Justification section of the application.

Proposals that are heavy in salary expenses may be less competitive during grant selection.

All persons seeking reimbursement for salary, wage or fringe benefit expenses must maintain records and may be required to present documentation of the amount of the employee's time devoted to various efforts and funding sources.

Fringe Benefits: NYFVI may pay fringe benefits at a rate consistent with the applicant's place of employment, for that class of employee. Contact NYFVI staff for more information.

Consulting: NYFVI may reimburse consultant fees. Project leaders will document daily or hourly rates. Describe specific roles and expected outcomes for each consultant in the Budget Justification section of the application.

Subcontracts: NYFVI may reimburse for subcontracted portions of the project completed by persons and organizations other than the contracted organization. Describe specific roles and expected outcomes for each subcontractor in the Budget Justification section of the application; itemize the total cost of each subcontract. Submission of subcontracts will be required if the project is approved.

Shipping: NYFVI may reimburse expenses for shipping incurred during a project for project specific activities. Rates for expenses should not be excessive.

Travel: NYFVI may provide reimbursement for expenses for travel directly related to the project. Reimbursement will be for expenses that are not excessive and similar to "government rates." Out-of-state travel is discouraged but may be allowed. Out-of-state travel requires detailed explanation in the Budget Justification portion of the application, as well as prior written approval from NYFVI.

Fees: NYFVI may provide reimbursement for expenses for conference registration fees for individuals involved in the project ***to attend and present*** at a conference in New York State and related to the project. If reimbursement is for attendance, provide a detailed explanation of the conference and its importance to the project within the Budget Justification section. If a farmer is being reimbursed for any direct costs incurred through implementation of the project, please include it here and provide an explanation in the budget justification section.

Services and Lab Analysis: NYFVI may provide reimbursement of expenses for services and laboratory fees essential to conducting the project. Reimbursement will be for the percentage of the fees used for purposes of the funded project.

Materials & Supplies: NYFVI may reimburse expenses for materials and supplies that directly relate to the project. Rates of expenses should not be excessive. Generally, materials and supplies are items whose per unit purchase price is less than $5,000. Often these items have a useful life of one year or less.

Conferences & Seminars: NYFVI may reimburse expenses associated with conducting a conference, workshop or seminar that benefits farmers directly and relates to the project. Costs may include speaker travel, honoraria, meals, site rental, etc. Charging participants for a portion of the conference, seminar or workshop is strongly encouraged. If funds will be generated from the project describe how the funds will be collected, handled and used.

Advertising & Promotions: NYFVI may reimburse expenses to produce and distribute brochures, flyers, displays or other items to promote project activities or out-comes, or paid advertisements for programs. Per USDA grant terms, funds cannot be used for promotional items such as swag, gifts, prizes, memorabilia, and souvenirs. Funds also cannot be used for costs designed solely to promote the image of an organization, general logo, or general brand.

Rentals: The grant program may provide reimbursement of expenses for rented equipment that is essential to conducting the project. Reimbursement will be for the percentage of the rental cost of the item used for purposes of the funded project. General purpose and special purpose equipment may be rented. Include a description and justification for each equipment item. Indicate the total funds requested for each item and include a subtotal for all funded equipment costs.

Equipment: Equipment refers to items, including machines, tools, electronics, and other items with a per unit acquisition cost of $5,000 or more and whose useful life is more than one year. "Acquisition cost" means the cost of the asset, whether funded in whole or in part via this grant, including the cost to put it in place. Purchase of general purpose equipment is not allowed. Special purpose equipment may be purchased or rented under the grant and is limited to equipment used for research, medical, scientific, or other technical activities.

Project leaders who request equipment reimbursement must provide detailed explanation of why the item is essential to the project, cannot be obtained at lesser cost through rental, lease, borrowing, etc., who will use the item, what percent of the item will be used in service of this project, and how the item will be disposed of or used after the grant project ends.

Indicate the total funds requested for each item and include a subtotal for all funded equipment costs.

Other: If you have costs that don't fit elsewhere, please include them here, with a detailed explanation in the budget justification section. In some academic organizations, it is necessary that a student receive tuition reimbursement in order to be allowed to work on a project. In other organizations, living stipends are considered payment for work. If either of those scenarios is required by your organization, please include those costs here.

Indirect Costs: Indirect cost are allowed at a rate not to exceed the federal maximum of 8% of the total direct cost amount requested. Indirect costs are any costs incurred for common or joint objectives that therefore, cannot be readily identified with an individual eligible project, program, or activity. Indirect

costs generally include facilities operation and maintenance costs, depreciation and general administrative expenses. Indirect, overhead, or F&A charges cannot be levied twice, i.e. if indirect cost are charged on the project direct cost total then they cannot be charged on subcontracts or consulting agreements and vice versa.

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Project leaders must provide a detailed description for each requested budget category, including all major expenses. Provide detail of how the components of each budget line were calculated. Provide explanations of how the items will advance the proposed project.

LEVERAGED FUNDING

Describe all sources of current and/or potential funding for this project proposal. Indicate which sources are current, and which are potential. Note the funding source (ex. USDA, SARE, NYFVI, Check-off Funds, etc.) and the total grant amount. Describe how the additional funds from the SCBGP will expand the scope and/or impact of this project.

ABSTRACT *(Character Limit: 1,500)*

Although this is the last component of the application as entered online, it is the first section that reviewers see. Be sure to keep it concise and clear. Write for the layman- avoid jargon. Edit and edit again, every word is important.

Provide a brief and comprehensive synopsis of the proposed project, including a description of the need for the work, farmer participation, expected outcomes and goals, as well as how the project will progress or met goals. Major project partners and outreach work may also be part of the abstract. Uses for the abstract include describing the project in NYFVI print and online publications.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Funded projects will be required to report quarterly in the online reporting system at db.nyfvi.org. These reports will provide updates on participating producers, project activities and achievements, success stories, and project changes, among other items. These reports provide the justification for reimbursement of expenses, which may be denied if progress reporting is insufficient.

Additionally, a final report will be required at project completion, due no later than 45 days after the project end date. The New York Farm Viability Institute will withhold ten percent (10%) of the total grant award until approval of the final report. The Final Report includes sections to describe changes in baseline farm data, improvements to farm profitability, outreach efforts, industry changes, farm success stories, photos, presentations, publications, and more.

NYFVI reserves the right to conduct site visits as well as follow-up surveys of funded projects in order to determine long-term impacts.

PROJECT SELECTION

Proposals submitted to the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program will first undergo review by New York Farm Viability Institute staff to check for completeness. Incomplete or inaccurate applications may be ineligible for grant funds and eliminated from consideration.

Proposals will be reviewed and scored by a select panel of specialty crop farmers with expertise appropriate to the proposal.

In addition to the program priorities, reviewers and the board will judge and score proposals in the areas of producer involvement, relevance to New York agriculture, work plan (Performance Targets, Milestones and Activities), outreach plan, farm-level impact and evaluation plan, and budget. Additional information about the proposal evaluation can be found here on the NYFVI website.

The New York Farm Viability Institute board of directors will review and discuss all proposals, along with review panel scores and comments, and make a final funding ranking. This ranking of top proposals will be sent to NYSDAM for review and final selection by the New York Specialty Crop Block Grant Advisory Committee.

NYFVI staff and board members reserve the right to request information or seek information or review of proposals or sections of proposals from person/s participating in the project or from those experienced or knowledgeable about aspects relevant to the proposal.

Institute staff and board members also reserve the right to request additional information from project leaders. Funded projects will be asked to provide additional detail regarding the Work Plan and Budget Justification sections as outlined by the USDA.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

NYFVI reserves the right to:

- reject any or all proposals received with respect to this RFP;
- waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification and concurrence of the applicant;
- utilize any or all ideas submitted in the proposals received unless those ideas are covered by legal patent or proprietary rights;
- request from an applicant additional information as deemed necessary to more fully evaluate the proposal;
- amend the program's specifications after their release, with appropriate written notice posted on the Department's website;
- select only certain portions of proposals for funding;
- make all final decisions with respect to the amount of funding and the timing of payments to be provided to an applicant; and
- negotiate the terms of the scope of work and budget.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

All proposals submitted and all related contracts and reports may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Law.

FEDERAL CONDITIONS

Funds for this program will be provided to NYFVI through the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, pursuant to an agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. Successful applicants will be required to comply with all applicable Federal statutes, regulations and policy requirements. A list of applicable statutes, regulations and policy requirements as well as a summary of the potential impact of certain National Policy Requirements on certain grants can be found at http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5086615.

NYFVI Contact Information

Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact the NYFVI Grant Coordinator or Executive Director with any questions. All questions, and their answers will be posted on the website. All applicants will be notified if a new question and answer has been posted.

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Appendix A: Eligible Specialty Crops

More information about eligible specialty crops can be found at: https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp/specialty-crop. In the event of any discrepancy between lists, the USDA website will take precedence.

Fruits and Tree Nuts

Almond	Grape (including raisin)
Apple	Guava
Apricot	Kiwi
Aronia berry	
Avocado	Litchi
Banana	Macadamia
Blackberry	Mango
Blueberry	Nectarine
Breadfruit	Olive
Cacao	Papaya
Cashew	Passion fruit
Citrus	Peach
Cherimoya	Pear
Cherry	Pecan
Chestnut (for nuts)	Persimmon
Coconut	Pineapple
Coffee	Pistachio
Cranberry	Plum (including prune)
Currant	Pomegranate
Date	Quince
Feijoa	Raspberry
Fig	Strawberry
Filbert (hazelnut)	Suriname cherry
Gooseberry	Walnut

Vegetables

Artichoke	Mushroom (cultivated)
Asparagus	Mustard and other greens
Bean Snap or green Lima Dry, edible	Okra
Beet, table	Pea Garden, English or edible pod, Dry, Edible
Broccoli (including broccoli raab)	Onion
Brussels sprouts	Opuntia
Cabbage (including Chinese)	Parsley
Carrot	Parsnip
Cauliflower	Pepper
Celeriac	Potato
Celery	Pumpkin
Chickpeas (large and small)	Radish (all types)
Chive	Rhubarb
Collards (including kale)	Rutabaga
Cucumber	Salsify
Edamame	Spinach
Eggplant	Squash (summer and winter)
Endive	Sweet corn
Garlic	Sweet potato
Horseradish	Swiss chard

Vegetables, Continued	
Kohlrabi	Taro
Leek	Tomato (including tomatillo)
Lentils	Turnip
Lettuce	Watermelon
Melon (all types)	

Culinary Herbs and Spices

Ajwain	Clary	Malabathrum
Allspice	Cloves	Marjoram
Angelica	Comfrey	Mint (all types)
Anise	Common rue	Nutmeg
Annatto	Coriander	Oregano
Artemisia (all types)	Cress	Orris root
Asafetida	Cumin	Paprika
Basil (all types)	Curry	Parsley
Bay (cultivated)	Dill	Pepper
Bladder wrack	Fennel	Rocket (arugula)
Bolivian coriander	Fenugreek	Rosemary
Borage	Filé (gumbo, cultivated)	Rue
Calendula	Fingerroot	Saffron
Chamomile	French sorrel	Sage (all types)
Candle nut	Galangal	Savory (all types)
Caper	Ginger	Tarragon
Caraway	Hops	Thyme
Cardamom	Horehound	Turmeric
Cassia	Hyssop	Vanilla
Catnip	Lavender	Wasabi
Chervil	Lemon balm	Water cress
Chicory	Lemon thyme	
Cicely	Lovage	
Cilantro	Mace	
Cinnamon	Mahlab	

Medicinal Herbs

Artemisia	Marshmallow
Arum	Mullein
Astragalus	Passion flower
Boldo	Patchouli
Cananga	Pennyroyal
Comfrey	Pokeweed
Coneflower	St. John's wort
Fenugreek	Senna
Feverfew	Skullcap
Foxglove	Sonchus
Ginkgo biloba	Sorrel
Ginseng	Stevia
Goat's rue	Tansy
Goldenseal	Urtica
Gypsywort	Witch hazel
Horehound	Wood betony
Horsetail	Wormwood
Lavender	Yarrow
Liquorice	Yerba buena

Nursery, Floriculture, and Horticulture Crops

Horticulture

Honey	Tea Leaves
Turfgrass	Maple Syrup
Hops	

Annual Bedding Plants

Begonia	Coleus
Dahlia	Geranium
Impatiens	Marigold
Pansy	Petunia
Snapdragon	Vegetable Transplants

Potted Flowering Plants

African Violet	Lily
Azalea	Orchid
Florist Chrysanthemum	Poinsettia
Flowering Bulbs	Rose
Hydrangea	

Potted Herbaceous Perennials

Astilbe	Hosta
Columbine	Ivy
Coreopsis	Ornamental Grasses
Daylily	Peony
Delphinium	Phlox
Dianthus	Rudbeckia
Garden Chrysanthemum	Salvia
Heuchera	Vinca

Cut Flowers

Carnation	Chrysanthemum
Delphinium	Gladiolus
Iris	Lily
Orchid	Snapdragon
Tulip	Rose

Cut Cultivated Greens

Asparagus Fern	Holly
Coniferous Evergreens	Leatherleaf Fern
Eucalyptus	Pittosporum

Foliage Plants

Anthurium	Bromeliad
Cacti	Dieffenbachia
Dracaena	Fern
Ficus	Ivy
Palm	Philodendron
Spathipyllum	

Christmas Trees

Balsam Fir	Living Christmas Tree
Blue Spruce	Noble Fir
Douglas Fir	Scots Pine
Fraser Fir	White Pine

Fruit and Nut Plants

Berry Plants	Citrus Trees	Deciduous Fruit and Nut Trees
Grapevines		

Deciduous Flowering Trees

Crabapple	Dogwood
Crepe Myrtle	Flowering Pear
Flowering Cherry	Flowering Plum
Hawthorn	Magnolia
Redbud	Service Berry

Broadleaf Evergreens

Azalea	Boxwood
Cotoneaster	Euonymus
Holly	Pieris
Rhododendron	Viburnum

Deciduous Shade Trees

Ash	Elm
Honey Locust	Linden
Maple	Oak
Poplar	Sweetgum
Sycamore	

Landscape Conifers

Aborvitae	Juniper
Chamaecyparis	Pine
Fir	Spruce
Hemlock	Yew

Deciduous Shrubs

Barberry	Buddleia
Hibiscus	Hydrangea
Rose	Spirea
Viburnum	Weigela

List of Ineligible Commodities

Alfalfa	Peanuts
Amylomaize	Pod corn
Barley	Primrose
Buckwheat	Quinoa
Camelina	Rapeseed oil
Canola	Range grasses
Canola Oil	Rice
Clover	Rye
Cotton	Safflower meal
Cottonseed oil	Safflower oil
Dairy products	Shellfish (marine or freshwater)
Dent corn	Sorghum
Eggs	Soybean oil
Field corn	Soybeans
Fish (marine or freshwater)	Striped Maize
Flax	Sugar beets
Flaxseed	Sugarcane
Flint corn	Sunflower oil
Flower corn	Tobacco
Hay	Tofu
Hemp	Triticale
Livestock products	Waxy corn
Millet	Wheat
Mustard seed oil	White corn
Oats	Wild Rice
Peanut oil	

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