

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program 2026

New York Farm Viability Institute

Overview and Technical Notes

This request for proposals (RFP) for the 2026 Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) New York State program is utilizing an application and scoring criteria aligned with the USDA application that will be submitted by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM) to the USDA. Please read all instructions carefully.

All applications must be submitted by 11:59 pm on Monday February 16, 2026.

The program will be managed entirely online. Applicants must first register in the online system. The link to the online application [is available here](#).

Once logged in to the online system, the full RFP is available as a PDF by clicking the “Question List” box in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. Instructions are also provided in each question group.

Training Webinar

The SCBG process prohibits specific conversations between applicants and NYFVI staff about their proposals. Applicants are strongly encouraged to register and attend a webinar to familiarize applicants with the online grants interface platform and review key criteria.

- Grant Writing Webinar 1: Tuesday January 20, 2026 2:00pm-3:30pm. [Register](#)
- Grant Writing Webinar 2: Thursday January 22, 2026 9:00am-10:30am. [Register](#)

Both webinars will be recorded and made available for later viewing at [nyfvi.org](#).

Evaluation

All proposals will be evaluated by farmers with expertise in the proposed crop. The NYFVI [board of directors](#) will also evaluate the proposals and consider the input from the farmer review panels. NYFVI will submit a ranked list of proposals to AGM who will discuss the proposals with its Specialty Crop Advisory Committee and together they will make the final funding decisions.

If your proposal is selected for inclusion in the NYS SCBG application to the USDA, an abridged version of your proposal, formatted as a project profile, will be used. **It is anticipated that all applicants will be notified by April 13th, 2026.**

If you have any questions, they may be submitted via email to Aaron Ristow at aristow@nyfvi.org.

Recent Program Changes

- The RFP corresponds with USDAs’ SCBG program [outcomes and measurable indicators](#).
- Five additional points will be added to the score for proposals that:
 - Develop and increase the utilization of IPM strategies and programs to

address pests and disease threats in NY specialty crops.

- Research, demonstration, and training to develop, test, or increase adoption of innovative, specialized equipment for weed management.
- Projects may focus on marketing-based research projects that improve the competitiveness of specialty crops.
- Scoring criteria for the program were updated to align with program goals and are available both [online](#) and at the end of this document.
- Applications between \$50,000 to \$200,000 will be accepted for consideration.

Projects must benefit more than one product or organization

All proposals must seek to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Applicants should describe how the project creates measurable outcomes for the specialty crop industry rather than a single organization, institution or individual.

Examples of Acceptable Projects:

- A non-profit organization, or an extension educator requests funds to demonstrate the viability of organic small fruit production and partners with a farm to conduct a demonstration project and publicize the working model of diversification to other regional growers.
- A non-profit organization leads a market research or marketing project to provide information to growers across an industry to support their marketing efforts.
- A researcher develops or evaluates packaging for a specific type of product and shares the results with growers.

Examples of Unacceptable Projects:

- A company requests grant funds to purchase starter plants or equipment used to plant, cultivate, and grow a specialty crop to make a profit or to expand production of a single business or organization.
- A single specialty crop organization requests grant funds to market its organization so that it can increase its membership.

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 10107 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, Public Law 115-343 (the Farm Bill).

Key Dates

Date	Activity
Monday January 19, 2026	RFP opens
Tuesday January 20, 2026	Grant Writing Webinar 2:00pm-3:30 pm
Thursday January 22, 2026	Grant Writing Webinar 9:00am-10:30 am
11:59 pm Monday February 16, 2026	Applications due
Monday April 13, 2026	Anticipated notification date. Project leaders must be available to make any requested revisions to proposals.
Monday April 20, 2026	Anticipated date for project profiles submitted to AGM
October 1, 2026	Anticipated grant awards announced by USDA

Definition of Specialty Crops

For 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 can be found on USDA’s web site: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbfp/specialty-crop>

Available Funding

It is anticipated that **there will be approximately \$600,000 available through NYFVI** for the competitive grant portion of the 2026 SCBG Program. Funding is contingent upon the award of funds to AGM by the USDA. Final grant awards will be made upon final approval of the AGM application to the USDA and execution of NYFVI’s contract with AGM.

Applicant Eligibility

Eligible applicants include:

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

Ineligible applicants are encouraged to participate as project partners.

Projects should have general applicability and statewide significance to the specialty crop industry. They cannot benefit a sole commercial product, single business, or individual.

Project Duration, Funding Amount and Eligible Costs

All projects must start in 2027 and be fully completed on or before June 30, 2029. Project extensions are not allowed. Applicants should give themselves ample time to complete all reporting requirements before the deadline.

Funding requests for individual projects must be between \$50,000 and \$200,000.

Eligible costs include: personnel, fringe benefits, travel, special purpose equipment, supplies, and contractual costs and services directly related to an eligible project.

Indirect costs are allowed at a rate not to exceed the federal maximum of 8% of the direct cost amount requested. Indirect costs are any costs incurred for common or joint objectives that therefore cannot be readily assigned to an individual eligible project, program, or activity. Indirect costs generally include facilities operation and maintenance costs, depreciation and general administrative expenses. If a subcontract is used, no more than the federal maximum can be charged among both entities.

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 agreed upon start date of the project.

Project Selection and Scoring Criteria

Proposals submitted to the SCBG Program will first undergo review by NYFVI 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. The Scoring Criteria is outlined [here](#) and at the end of this document.

The NYFVI board of directors will review and discuss all proposals, along with review panel scores and comments, and make a final funding ranking. The ranking of top proposals will be sent to AGM for review and final selection by the New York Specialty Crop Block Grant Advisory Committee as previously described above.

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.

NYFVI staff and board members also reserve the right to request additional information from project leaders.

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 evaluate the proposal more fully.
- 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.
- 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 Act.

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 AGM. 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](#).

Federal Conditions

Funds for this program will be provided to NYFVI through NYS AGM, pursuant to an agreement with the USDA, 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 Rules & Regulations Agricultural Marketing Service (usda.gov)

Reporting Requirements

Funded projects will be required to report on their activities on a quarterly basis to provide appropriate justification for the accompanying reimbursement requests. Reimbursement requests will not be processed until the progress report has been submitted. Effort should be made to submit documentation of all costs that were incurred in the correct quarter.

An annual report is required in November of every year for inclusion in the NYS report to the USDA.

A final report is required at the project's conclusion. It will be included in the NYS report to the USDA that is due November of 2029. Please be aware that there is no leeway to deliver the

annual report or final report past the deadline. *Note: the USDA may request follow-up information to these reports and project leaders are expected to make responding to these inquiries a priority.*

NYFVI will withhold ten percent (10%) of the total grant award until approval of the final report.

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

The template for the annual and final report is available [here](#).

NYFVI Contact Information

All questions about the RFP must be submitted via email to aristow@nyfvi.org.

Technical Notes

If you would like to collaborate on this request with other individuals, you may use the blue "Collaborate" button in the top-right corner of the grant application platform page. Type in their email address and a brief message inviting them to edit the application. Click [here](#) for Collaborator troubleshooting.

The RFP uses branching questions to help reduce the number of fields that are visible to all applicants and reviewers. To facilitate the branching process, there are a number of yes/no questions built into the application. Yes answers will bring up additional fields for completion. If you find you need more space, in any area please let us know.

We would also appreciate your feedback on the platform and application. Please send comments to aristow@nyfvi.org.

Project Title and Dates

Create a title for the project. Keep in mind the title of the project will appear in program publications. Generally, a title that is brief but descriptive of the project and its goals works best.

Project Title*

Character Limit: 250

Use the drop-down menus to select a start and end date for your project.

All projects must start in 2027 and be fully completed on or before June 30, 2029. **Project extensions are not allowed.** Applicants should give themselves ample time to complete all reporting requirements before the deadline. Please select your timeframe carefully.

Project Start Date*

Choices

January 1, 2027

April 1, 2027

July 1, 2027

October 1, 2027

Project End Date*

Choices

September 30, 2027

December 31, 2027

March 31, 2028

June 30, 2028

September 30, 2028

December 31, 2028

March 31, 2029

June 30, 2029

Organizational Tracking System*

If your organization uses a numbering system for proposal identification and tracking, please provide that information. If your organization does not use a tracking system, enter NA.

Note: Per an agreement with Cornell University, NYFVI will not review an application unless an OSP number is provided.

Character Limit: 250

USDA Project Partner and Summary

Include a project summary of 250 words or less suitable for dissemination to the public. A Project Summary provides a very brief (one sentence, if possible) description of your project. It should include:

- The name of the applicant organization that, if awarded a grant, will establish an agreement or contractual relationship to lead and execute the project,
- The project's purpose, deliverables, and expected outcomes, and
- A description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period.

Project Partner and Summary*

Character Limit: 250

Agricultural Production Sector and Target Beneficiaries

In this section, your selection will determine the type of farms that will review your proposal.

Agricultural Commodity*

Please indicate which type of NY specialty crops your work will benefit.

Choices

- Apples and other tree fruit (cider)
- Apples and other tree fruit (non-cider)
- Aquaculture
- Berries
- Christmas Trees
- Culinary and/or medicinal herbs
- Grapes
- Green Industry – Nursery and Landscape plants
- Hops
- Maple Syrup
- Pollinators - Honey
- Sod
- Vegetables or Fruit--Controlled Environment Agriculture crop
- Vegetables or Fruit--High tunnel Specialty crop
- Vegetables—Field grown
- Other

Other response

If you selected 'other' in the list above, please provide the name of the crop your proposal will support. Please consult the [USDA list](#) to ensure it is eligible.

Character Limit: 100

Production Systems*

This work will benefit:

Choices

Organic production only.

Conventional production only.

Both organic and conventional production.

Target Beneficiaries*

Use specifics to describe the agricultural production sector that will benefit from this work. Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the scale of the crop in NYS, how many acres are grown, where it is grown, the size of the farms growing the crops, and the types of production systems that are used. If you are proposing the development of a new crop, discuss the types of farm operations that would be most likely to benefit from producing it.

USDA Outcomes Alignment

Although the USDA SCBG program includes seven outcomes, this RFP seeks work that is focused only on achieving the four outcomes listed below.

As you consider your selection, keep in mind the following:

- All outcomes are associated with [measurable indicators](#).
- Proposals must provide specific numerical target values for any indicator that will be used to measure the impact of your work.
- All activity in a proposal must be associated with achieving an indicator.
- If a proposal is funded, it will be required to measure and report on each indicator selected.

Outcome 4: Improve Pest and Disease Control Processes

This priority is focused on driving practice adoption of existing management practices. None of the anticipated results/indicators associated with this priority include development or research trials. If your work includes late-stage research trials as well as practice adoption, you should also select Outcome 6.

Outcome 5: Develop New Seed Varieties and Specialty Crops

This priority is focused on plant breeding. Later stage work will be expected to measure the adoption of new seeds or crops by farmers.

Outcome 6: Expand Specialty Crop Research and Development

This priority is focused directly on agricultural research, including market/marketing research. Later stage research would be expected to also seek to drive and track adoption of the findings using the measures in Outcome 4.

Outcome 7: Improve Environmental Sustainability of Specialty Crops

This priority encompasses both driving awareness and adoption of practices as well as developing or improving new tools or technologies.

USDA Outcomes*

Please select one or more of the USDA Outcomes that are aligned with your proposal.

Choices

- Improve Pest and Disease Control Processes
- Develop New Seed Varieties and Specialty Crops
- Expand Specialty Crop Research and Development
- Improve the Environmental Sustainability of Specialty Crops

NYS Project Types**NYS Project Types ***

The New York Specialty Crop Block Grant Advisory Committee, composed of farmer members of specialty crop organizations and associations, and other industry stakeholders, has developed specific research and education priorities that are aligned with the USDA outcomes.

1. Research and/or grower education and training that addresses a key production problem or need specific to NYS.
2. **Develop and increase the utilization of IPM strategies and programs to address pests and disease threats in NY specialty crops.**
3. Plant breeding, and trialing of new varieties, for disease resistance and/or optimal performance in NY conditions.
4. Applied research and development focused on new specialty crop value-added products, including new processes and sustainable packaging.
5. Market based research that enhances the competitiveness of NY specialty crops, including product development and consumer messaging.
6. **Research, demonstration and training to develop, test, or increase adoption of innovative, specialized equipment for weed management.**
7. My proposal is aligned with the USDA outcomes, but not a specific NYS priority.

****Extra 5 points will be awarded to proposals prioritizing project types #2 and #6.***

Choices

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7

USDA SCBG Outcomes and Measurable Indicators Branching Questions

These questions will allow the system to tailor the online application to the Outcomes selected.

Outcome 4*

This priority is focused on driving practice adoption of existing management practices. None of the anticipated results/indicators associated with this priority include development or research trials. If your work includes late stage research trials as well as practice adoption, you should also select indicators in Outcome 6.

Is Outcome 4: **Improve Pest and Disease Control Processes** aligned with your project?

Choices

Yes

No

Outcome 5*

This priority is focused primarily on plant breeding. Later stage work will be expected to measure the adoption of new seeds or crops by farmers.

Is Outcome 5: **Develop New Seed Varieties and Specialty Crops** aligned with your project?

Choices

Yes

No

Outcome 6*

This priority is focused directly on agricultural research. Later stage research would be expected to also seek to drive and track adoption of the findings using the measures in Outcome 4.

Is Outcome 6 **Expand Specialty Crop Research and Development** aligned with your project?

Choices

Yes

No

Outcome 7*

This priority encompasses both driving awareness and adoption of practices as well as developing or improving new tools or technologies.

Is Outcome 7: **Improve Environmental Sustainability of Specialty Crops** aligned with your project?

Choices

Yes

No

Outcome 4 Indicators

Every outcome has USDA indicators that are associated with the work. Previously you selected *Outcome 4 Improve Pest and Disease Control Processes* as one of your project outcomes. Please review the indicators that are associated with Outcome 4 then select all indicators that your project will track and measure.

4.1 Number of stakeholders that gained knowledge about science-based tools to combat pests and diseases

4.2 Number of stakeholders that adopted pest and disease control best practices, technologies, or innovations.

4.3 Number of stakeholders trained in early detection and rapid response practices to combat pests and diseases. Of those:

 4.3a Number of additional acres managed using integrated pest management.

4.4 Number of stakeholders that implemented new diagnostic systems, methods, or technologies for analyzing specialty crop pests and diseases.

4.5 Total number of producers/processors that enhanced or maintained pest and disease control practices. Of those, the number that reported:

 4.5 a Reduction in product lost to pest and diseases

 4.5 b Improved crop quality.

 4.5 c Reduction in labor costs.

 4.5 d Reduction in pesticide use.

4.6 Number of producers/processors improving the efficiency of pest and disease control diagnostics and response testing, as reported by:

 4.6 a Improving speed.

 4.6 b Improving reliability.

 4.6 c Expanding capability.

 4.6 d Increasing testing (i.e. survey work for pests).

Outcome 4 Indicators Numerical Targets

For each indicator that you will be using, please provide a numerical target. It is expected that your project will track and report on these indicators.

Indicator 4.1

Number of stakeholders that gained knowledge about science-based tools to combat pests and disease.

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 4.2.

Number of stakeholders that adopted pest and disease control best practices, technologies, or innovations.

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 4.3

Number of stakeholders trained in early detection and rapid response practices to combat pests and diseases.

Character Limit: 5

Sub-Indicator 4.3a

If you provided a number in 4.3, what is the number of additional acres managed using integrated pest management?

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 4.4

Number of stakeholders that implemented new diagnostic systems, methods, or technologies for analyzing specialty crop pests and diseases.

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 4.5

Total number of producers/processors that enhanced or maintained pest and disease control practices.

Character Limit: 5

Sub-indicator 4.5a

Of the number provided in Indicator 4.5, how many reported a reduction in product lost to pest and disease?

Character Limit: 5

Sub-Indicator 4.5b

Of the number provided in Indicator 4.5, how many reported improved crop quality?

Character Limit: 5

Sub-Indicator 4.5c

Of the number provided in Indicator 4.5, how many reported a reduction in labor costs?

Character Limit: 5

Sub-Indicator 4.5d

Of the number provided in Indicator 4.5, how many reported a reduction in pesticide use?

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 4.6a

Number of producers/processors improving the efficiency of pest and disease control diagnostics and response testing, as reported by **improving speed**.

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 4.6b

Number of producers/processors improving the efficiency of pest and disease control diagnostics and response testing, as reported by **improving reliability**.

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 4.6c

Number of producers/processors improving the efficiency of pest and disease control diagnostics and response testing, as reported by **expanding capability**.

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 4.6d

Number of producers/processors improving the efficiency of pest and disease control diagnostics and response testing, as reported by **increasing testing (i.e. survey work for pests)**.

Character Limit: 5

Outcome 5 Indicators

Every outcome has USDA indicators that are associated with the work. Previously you selected *Outcome 5 Develop New Seed Varieties and Specialty Crops* as one of your project outcomes. Please review the indicators that are associated with Outcome 5, then select all indicators that your project will track and measure.

5.1 Number of cultivar and/or variety trials conducted.

Of those:

5.1a the number that advanced to further stages of development.

5.2 Number of cultivars and/or seed varieties developed.

5.3 Number of cultivars and/or seed varieties released.

5.4 Number of growers adopting new cultivars and/or varieties.

5.5 Number of acres planted with new cultivars and/or varieties.

Outcome 5: Numerical Targets for Indicators

For each indicator that you will use, please provide a numerical target. It is expected that your project will track and report on these indicators.

Indicator 5.1

Number of cultivar and/or variety trials conducted:

Character Limit: 5

Sub Indicator 5.1a

Of the number provided in your response to indicator 5.1, what is the number that advanced to further stages of development?

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 5.2

Number of cultivars and/or seed varieties developed:

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 5.3

Number of cultivars and/or seed varieties released:

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 5.4

Number of growers adopting new cultivars and/or varieties:

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 5.5

Number of acres planted with new cultivars and/or varieties:

Character Limit: 5

Outcome 6 Indicators

Every outcome has USDA indicators that are associated with the work. Previously you selected *Outcome 6 Expand Specialty Crop Research and Development* as one of your project outcomes. Please review the indicators that are associated with Outcome 6, then select all indicators that your project will track and measure.

6.1 Number of research goals accomplished.

6.2 For research conclusions, the number that:

6.2a Yielded findings that supported continued research.

6.2b Yielded findings that led to completion of study.

6.2c Yielded findings that allow for implementation of new practice, process, or technology.

6.3 Number of industry representatives and other stakeholders who engaged with research results.

6.4 Total number of research outputs published to industry publications and/or academic journals. For each published research output, the:

6.4a Number of views/reads of published research/data.

6.4b Number of citations counted.

Outcome 6: Numerical Targets for Indicators

For each indicator that you will use, please provide a numerical target. It is expected that your project will track and report on these indicators.

Indicator 6.1

Number of research goals accomplished:

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 6.2a

For research conclusions, the number that **yielded finding that supported continued research**.

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 6.2b

For research conclusions, the number that **yielded finding that led to the completion of study**.

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 6.2c

For research conclusions, the number that **yielded findings that allow for implementation of new practice, process or technology**.

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 6.3

Number of industry representatives and other stakeholders who engaged with research results:

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 6.4

Total number of research outputs published to industry publications and/or academic journals:

Character Limit: 5

Sub-Indicator 6.4a

For each published research output estimated in indicator 6.4, provide the number of views/reads of published research/data.

Character Limit: 5

Sub-Indicator 6.4b

For each published research output estimated in indicator 6.4, provide the number of citations counted.

Character Limit: 5

Outcome 7 Indicators

Previously you selected *Outcome 7 Improve Environmental Sustainability of Specialty Crops* as one of your project outcomes. Following is the list of indicators that are associated with Outcome 7.

- 7.1 Number of stakeholders that gained knowledge about environmental sustainability best practices, tools, or technologies.
- 7.2 Number of stakeholders reported with an intent to adopt environmental sustainability best practices, tools, or technologies.
- 7.3 Number of producers that adopted environmental best practices or tools.
- 7.4 Number of new tools/technologies developed or enhanced to improve sustainability/conservation or other environmental outcomes.
- 7.5 Number of additional acres managed with sustainable practices, tools, or technologies that focused on:
 - 7.5a Water quality/ conservation.
 - 7.5b Soil health.
 - 7.5c Biodiversity.
 - 7.5d Reduction in energy use.
 - 7.5e Other positive environmental outcomes (optional).
- 7.6 Number of additional acres established and maintained for the mutual benefit of pollinators/specialty crops.

Indicator 7: Numerical Targets

For every indicator you use, please establish a numerical target for that you will achieve and measure.

Indicator 7.1

Number of stakeholders that gained knowledge about environmental sustainability best practices, tools, or technologies:

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 7.2

Number of stakeholders reported with an intent to adopt environmental sustainability best practices, tools, or technologies:

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 7.3

Number of producers that adopted environmental best practices or tools:

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 7.4

Number of new tools/technologies developed or enhanced to improve sustainability, conservation, or other environmental outcomes:

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 7.5a

Number of additional acres managed with sustainable practices, tools, or technologies that **focused on water quality/conservation**

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 7.5b

Number of additional acres managed with sustainable practices, tools, or technologies that **focused on soil health**.

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 7.5c

Number of additional acres managed with sustainable practices, tools, or technologies that **focused on biodiversity**.

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 7.5d

Number of additional acres managed with sustainable practices, tools, or technologies that **focused on reduction in energy usage**.

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 7.5e

Number of additional acres managed with sustainable practices, tools, or technologies that **focused on other positive environmental outcomes**.

Character Limit: 5

Indicator 7.6

Number of additional acres established and maintained for the mutual benefit of pollinators/specialty crops:

Character Limit: 5

USDA Project Purpose

Provide details about the specific issue, problem or need the project will address. Be sure to make clear how the work will increase the competitiveness of NYS specialty crops.

Concisely describe the benefits of the potential solution to be developed or practice change to be adopted. Provide a rationale as to why NY growers will prefer the potential solution over other approaches to solving the problem.

If the proposal includes driving adoption of a practice, provide information that demonstrates an understanding of NY grower's attitudes and beliefs about the specific topic.

All proposals should include a synopsis of current practices, previous research, and outreach efforts. 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.

If understanding your project's purpose would benefit from the use of images, specifically charts or photos, they may be added here. Provide a caption for the information in the text box and clearly name the file. Only one file may be uploaded, and it must be a pdf file.

Project Purpose*

Character Limit: 3500

Supplemental images

Character Limit: 100 | File Size Limit: 10 MB

Project Network

The project network may include producers, collaborators and staff from the applicant organization. Please review each description carefully and add complete information for each individual.

It is anticipated that each category will have at least one person named. If that is not the case for your project, please write "none" in the first row under the "Last name/First name" column of the corresponding table

Specialty Crop Producers: Include any specialty crop producer who is, or will be, actively engaged with the project team on this project. Please provide ALL information for each individual. If you cannot provide an email address, it may create doubt that they are committed to the project. Do not include more than one individual from each farm business. *Only growers should be included in this table.*

Use the drop-down menu to select the role each individual will have on the project:

- Proposal Development
- Advisory Committee
- Project Implementation

Collaborators: Provide the name and contact information for all other individuals from outside of your organization that will be supporting the project in this section. These may include extension educators, consultants, research partners from other organizations, and agribusiness professionals. While all participants and collaborators should be listed, any non-

staff role that will be financially supported by the grant must be included.

Use the drop-down menu to indicate how the individual is participating.

- Project co-lead
- Project advisory committee,
- Project implementation partner: such as conducting research trials, supporting outreach and/or evaluation.

Project Lead and Staff: Provide the name and contact information for all individuals employed by the lead organization that will be supporting the project in this table. This should include any role that will be financially supported by the project.

Begin with the project lead, provide titles for each. If a role is currently vacant, indicate that in the last name/first name column.

Tip: This application system will allow you to provide others in your network access to this proposal by clicking the collaboration button in the upper right-hand corner.

Specialty Crop Producers Initial Application

Last Name, First Name	Farm Name, Town	County	Email	Role on Project

Collaborators

Last Name, First Name	Organization	Role on Project	Email

Project Lead and Staff

Last Name, First Name	Title	Email

Project Administrative Contact

Please provide the name of the individual who will be supporting the reimbursement process at your organization.

Administrative Contact	Last Name, First Name	Email Address
1:		

USDA External Project Support

External Project Support*

Describe the specialty crop stakeholders who support this project and why. (other than the applicant and organizations involved in the project).

Character Limit: 1500

Workplan: SMART Goals

The overall workplan should provide a clear understanding of how the activities of a project will be structured, implemented, tracked and evaluated. It includes three required components and an optional section:

- **SMART goal(s)** that integrate the USDA SCBG Outcomes and Indicators that you selected previously.
- **Project objectives** that provide an understanding of the components of your project and how the work will be structured.
- **Activities** that describe the steps that will be taken to complete each objective.
- **Optional: Materials and Methods section.** This section is provided to allow you to convey more specific information about the methodology used in any research proposal.

SMART goal(s): SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-Bound. *Each of the USDA outcomes you select should have its own goal that integrates the indicators you will use to measure the impact of your project.*

Example: By the conclusion of this project, 50 growers will learn about new scouting guidance for integrated pest management of onion thrips. 30 growers will be trained in the practice, and 15 growers will adopt this practice.

Objectives: For each SMART goal, list the objectives that you will achieve during the project. Each objective should be written as a single sentence that establishes a verifiable milestone to understand the steps the project will take to achieve its SMART goals. You are encouraged to have milestones that reflect the work outlined in your evaluation plans as well as your specific education and/or research activities.

Activities: For each objective, describe the actions that will be taken to achieve the objective. Be sure to make it clear who will be performing the activity described. Please be sure to include key data collection pieces as Activities in your project work plan.

Note: Any activity that will be supported by these funds should be directly related to a USDA outcome and indicators.

Optional Materials and Methods section: If you are proposing a research project that would be easier to understand if it included a discussion of your methodology, please complete this section. Do not include this information in your workplan.

Materials and Methods

If you are submitting a materials and methods document, please upload it here. It must be a single file, PDF is preferred.

File Size Limit: 25 MB

SMART Goal 1*

Character Limit: 1500

Do you have a second SMART goal?*

Choices

Yes

No

Workplan: SMART Goal 2

SMART Goal 2

Character Limit: 1500

Workplan: SMART Goal 1: Objectives & Activities

Objectives: List the objectives that you will achieve during the project. The objectives should be written as single sentences that serve as verifiable milestones to understand the project's progress in achieving its SMART goals. You are encouraged to have objectives that reflect the work outlined in your evaluation plans as well as your specific education and/or research activities.

Each project is different, and the number of Objectives necessary will vary. If you will not need four objectives to complete your work, simply type in "Not Applicable" for any that will not be used. If you need more objective, the form will expand to allow up to ten.

Activities: For each objective provide a concise description of the work necessary to achieve the corresponding objective. The use of text formatting is encouraged to allow for easier comprehension.

Timeframe: Please add an estimated completion date for the objective. These dates should demonstrate the incremental progress on your project.

SMART Goal 1: Objective 1**Character Limit: 250***SMART Goal 1: Objective 1 Activities****Character Limit: 1500***SMART Goal 1: Objective 1 Completion Date****Character Limit: 10***SMART Goal 1: Objective 2****Character Limit: 250***SMART Goal 1: Objective 2 Activities****Character Limit: 1500***SMART Goal 1: Objective 2 Completion Date***Character Limit: 10***SMART Goal 1: Objective 3****Character Limit: 250***SMART Goal 1: Objective 3 Activities****Character Limit: 1500***SMART Goal 1: Objective 3 Completion Date***Character Limit: 10***SMART Goal 1: Objective 4****Character Limit: 250***SMART Goal 1: Objective 4 Activities****Character Limit: 1500***SMART Goal 1: Objective 4 Completion Date***Character Limit: 10***Do you have additional objectives for SMART Goal 1?*****Choices**

Yes

No

Workplan: SMART Goal 1: ADDITIONAL Objectives and Activities

SMART Goal 1: Objective 5

Character Limit: 250

SMART Goal 1: Objective 5 Activities

Character Limit: 1500

SMART Goal 1: Objective 5 Completion Date

Character Limit: 10

SMART Goal 1: Objective 6

Character Limit: 250

SMART Goal 1: Objective 6 Activities

Character Limit: 1500

SMART Goal 1: Objective 6 Completion Date

Character Limit: 10

SMART Goal 1: Objective 7

Character Limit: 250

SMART Goal 1: Objective 7 Activities

Character Limit: 1500

SMART Goal 1: Objective 7 Completion Date

Character Limit: 10

SMART Goal 1: Objective 8

Character Limit: 250

SMART Goal 1: Objective 8 Activities

Character Limit: 1500

SMART Goal 1: Objective 8 Completion Date

Character Limit: 10

SMART Goal 1: Objective 9

Character Limit: 250

SMART Goal 1: Objective 9 Activities

Character Limit: 1500

SMART Goal 1: Objective 9 Completion Date*Character Limit: 10***SMART Goal 1: Objective 10***Character Limit: 250***SMART Goal 1: Objective 10 Activities***Character Limit: 1500***SMART Goal 1: Objective 10 Completion Date***Character Limit: 10***Workplan: SMART Goal 2 Objectives and Activities**

SMART Goal 2: Objective 1*Character Limit: 250***SMART Goal 2: Objective 1 Activities***Character Limit: 1500***SMART Goal 2: Objective 1 Completion Date***Character Limit: 10***SMART Goal 2: Objective 2***Character Limit: 250***SMART Goal 2: Objective 2 Activities***Character Limit: 1500***SMART Goal 2: Objective 2 Completion Date***Character Limit: 10***SMART Goal 2: Objective 3***Character Limit: 250***SMART Goal 2: Objective 3 Activities***Character Limit: 1500***SMART Goal 2: Objective 3 Completion Date***Character Limit: 10***SMART Goal 2: Objective 4***Character Limit: 250*

SMART Goal 2: Objective 4 Activities*Character Limit: 1500***SMART Goal 2: Objective 4 Completion Date***Character Limit: 10***Do you have additional objectives for SMART Goal 2?*****Choices**

Yes

No

Workplan: SMART Goal 2 ADDITIONAL Objectives and Activities**SMART Goal 2: Objective 5***Character Limit: 250***SMART Goal 2: Objective 5 Activities***Character Limit: 1500***SMART Goal 2: Objective 5 Completion Date***Character Limit: 10***SMART Goal 2: Objective 6***Character Limit: 250***SMART Goal 2: Objective 6 Activities***Character Limit: 1500***SMART Goal 2: Objective 6 Completion Date***Character Limit: 10***SMART Goal 2: Objective 7***Character Limit: 250***SMART Goal 2: Objective 7 Activities***Character Limit: 1500***SMART Goal 2: Objective 7 Completion Date***Character Limit: 10***SMART Goal 2: Objective 8***Character Limit: 250***SMART Goal 2: Objective 8 Activities***Character Limit: 1500*

SMART Goal 2: Objective 8 Completion Date*Character Limit: 10***SMART Goal 2: Objective 9***Character Limit: 250***SMART Goal 2: Objective 9 Activities***Character Limit: 1500***SMART Goal 2: Objective 9 Completion Date***Character Limit: 10***SMART Goal 2: Objective 10***Character Limit: 250***SMART Goal 2: Objective 10 Activities***Character Limit: 1500***SMART Goal 2: Objective 10 Completion Date***Character Limit: 10*

USDA: Data Collection to Report on Outcomes and Indicators

USDA Data Collection*

Explain how you will collect the required data to report on the outcome and indicator in the space below. This information should be consistent with any data collection activities included in your work plan.

Character Limit: 1500

Budget: Budget Summary and Overview

All expenses included in this budget must be directly associated with the activities described in the workplan.

Note: All budget tables are required by the USDA application.

Budget Summary Table

This budget is aligned with the USDA requirements. Using the tables below, please complete the individual components of your budget first, then manually enter the subtotals into this summary table.

If you will not incur any costs in a specific category, please enter the number zero.

Please ensure your total request is between \$50,000 and \$200,000. Submitting a request outside of this range may prevent the proposal from being reviewed.

Expense Category	Budget
Personnel	
Fringe Benefits	
Travel	
Equipment	
Supplies	
Contractual	
Other	
Direct Costs Subtotal	
Direct Costs Subtotal (Please Enter Number From Above)	
Indirect Costs	
Total Budget	

Budget: Personnel Costs

List the **lead** organization's employees whose time and effort can be specifically identified and easily and accurately trace to project activities that enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Include the individual's name and title, and the level of effort (number of hours or % of full time employee over the duration of the project. If a percentage is used it must be expressed as a decimal. Use the justification section to make it clear which approach is used for each employee.

Provide total of wages requested by individual. If a role is not yet associated with an individual, please indicate "vacant" in the Last name/first name column.

NYFVI may pay fringe benefits at a rate consistent with the applicant's place of employment, for that class of employee. Please include fringe benefits cost and % for each employee.

All organizations seeking reimbursement for salary, wage or fringe benefit expenses must maintain detailed records and will be required to present documentation of the amount of the employee's time devoted to the project.

If no wages will be requested, please enter the word none in the first column of the first row.

Personnel Costs: Wages and Fringe Benefits

Last name/First name (title)	Level of effort: Hours or % expressed as decimal	Wages \$	Fringe Rate %	Fringe Total \$

Personnel Justification*

For each individual listed in the Personnel Costs Table, describe the activities to be completed by name/title including approximately when activities will occur. *This section should be aligned with the description of activities provided in your workplan.*

Character Limit: 3500

Budget: 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 [Home | GSA \(http://www.gsa.gov.\)](http://www.gsa.gov)

Travel outside of NYS requires prior approval by NYFVI and the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets.

Travel Costs

Trip #	To/From	Expense/Unit of measure	# of Units	Cost per Unit	Funds Requested
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					

9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					
Total					

Travel Justification*

For each trip listed in the above table, describe the purpose of this trip and how it will achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project. Be sure to include approximately when the trip will occur. Add more trips by copying and pasting the existing listing or delete trips that aren't necessary.

Example: Trip 1: (Approximate Date of Travel MM/YYYY), Justification

Trip 2: (Approximate Date of Travel MM/YYYY), Justification

Character Limit: 3000

Travel Policy Confirmation

By checking "Yes" I confirm that my organization's established travel policies will be adhered to when completing the above-mentioned trips in accordance with 2 CFR 200.474 or 48 CFR subpart 31.2 as applicable.

Choices

Yes

Budget: Equipment Costs

Describe any special purpose equipment to be purchased or rented under the grant. "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 \$10,000 per unit and is used only for research, medical, scientific, or other technical activities.

The AMS General Terms and Conditions have been updated to reflect recent changes to the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200). The new conditions will apply to SCBGP's 2025 awards.

1. Threshold for Equipment is now \$10,000 or more.

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

Equipment Information Table

#	Equipment Type/Name	Rental or Purchase	Acquisition Date	Funds Requested
1				
2				
3				

Total				
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Equipment Justification

For each Equipment item listed in the above table describe how this equipment will be used to achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project.

Example: Equipment 1: Description and justification

Character Limit: 3500

Budget: Supplies

Supplies Cost Table

List the materials, supplies, and fabricated parts costing less than \$9,999 per unit and describe how they will support the purpose and goal of the proposal and enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

The AMS General Terms and Conditions have been updated to reflect recent changes to the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200). The new conditions will apply to SCBGP's 2025 awards.

2. Supplies are \$9,999 or less.

#	Supplies Item Description	Per-Unit Cost	# of Units/Pieces Purchased	Acquire Date	Funds Requested
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					

8.					
9.					
10.					
Total:					

Supplies Justification

Describe the purpose of each supply listed in the table above purchased and how it is necessary for the completion of the project's objective(s) and outcome(s). Include the row number.

Example:

Supply 1: Description and justification

Supply 2: Description and justification

Character Limit: 3500

Budget: Other Costs

Other Costs

This line should only be used if a cost is both allowable within the USDA guidelines, AND there is no other category for it.

In some academic organizations, it is necessary that a student receive tuition reimbursement to be allowed to work on a project. In other organizations, living stipends are considered payment for work. If either of those scenarios are required by your organization, please provide a description of those costs here and include the total requested below.

Character Limit: 250

Other Funds, Dollar Amount Requested

Character Limit: 20

Budget: Contractual/Consultant Costs

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. This section will often include internal or external charges for diagnostic testing and subcontracts to support project implementation with external organizations.

Using the table below, list all contractors/consultants, detailing the name, hourly/flat rate, and overall cost of the services performed. Please note that any statutory limitations on indirect costs also apply to contractors and consultants.

Please indicate if any of these contractual organizations or consultants will receive indirect as part of their payment.

Contractual/Consultants Table

#	Contractual Name/Organization	Hourly Rate or Flat Rate	Funds Requested	Indirect Included in total?
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
Total:				

Contractual Justification

For each of your known or anticipated contractors listed, provide a description of the project activities each will accomplish to meet the objectives and outcomes of the project. Include a justification for why contractual/consultant services are to be used. Include timeframes for each activity.

Note: If contractor employees or consultants' hourly rates of pay exceed the salary of a GS-15 step 10 Federal employee in NYS, provide a justification for the expense. This limit does not include fringe benefits, travel, indirect costs, or other expenses.

Example:

Contractual 1: Description and justification

Contractual 2: Description and justification

Character Limit: 1500

Budget: Indirect Costs

Indirect costs*

Indirect costs 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 costs are charged on the project direct cost total then they cannot be charged on subcontracts or consulting agreements and vice versa.

The indirect costs that are included in the budget summary table should only include the indirect costs that will be paid to the prime contractor.

Does your budget include any subcontractors or consultants that will be charging indirect costs?

Choices

Yes

No

Budget: Indirect Calculation NO

Your budget summary may include a full 8% of the total direct cost amount requested. Please calculate that number and add it to the budget summary table.

Budget: Indirect Calculation YES

The indirect costs for your project must be calculated in two steps.

- First, develop a total of all direct costs using the budget summary table.
- Next, working offline, subtract any subcontractor or consulting costs that are charging an indirect.
- Calculate the indirect costs for your application using the revised total direct costs.
- Use this number for the indirect costs in your budget summary table.

USDA: Program Income

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 AGM, 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
3. Supporting other projects or programs that further enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops.

Will your project have program income?

Choices

Yes

No

USDA Beneficiary Tracking

Project Beneficiaries*

Estimate the number of project beneficiaries:

Character Limit: 5

USDA Funding Sources

Current or future funding sources*

If your project is receiving, or will potentially receive, funds from another Federal or State grant program, list the names of those programs here.

Character Limit: 250

Funding Description*

Describe how the proposed project differs from or supplements the other grant program(s) efforts.

Character Limit: 1500

USDA: Additional Information

Statement of Enhancing Specialty Crops*

I confirm that this project enhances the competitiveness of specialty crops in accordance with and defined by the Farm Bill. Further information regarding the definition of a specialty crop can be found at [Specialty Crop Block Grant Program | Agricultural Marketing Service \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/ags/ams/SCBGP.html)

Choices

Yes

No

Continuation Project Information*

Does this project continue the efforts of a previously funded SCBG project?

Choices

Yes

No

USDA Continuation Information

Continuation: Summary of Outcomes*

Provide a summary (3 to 5 sentences) of the outcomes of the previous efforts.

Character Limit: 1500

Continuation: Description*

Describe how this project will differ from and build on the previous efforts.

Character Limit: 1500

Continuation: Lessons Learned*

What was previously learned from implementing this project, including potential improvements?

Character Limit: 1500

Continuation: Self-Sustaining*

Describe the likelihood of the project becoming self-sustaining and not indefinitely dependent on grant funds.

Character Limit: 1500

Continuation: Improvements to This Project*

How are the lessons learned and improvements being incorporated into this project to make the ongoing effort more effective and successful at meeting goals and outcomes?

Character Limit: 1500

Scoring Criteria for the Specialty Crop Grant Program

Applications will be evaluated to assess the degree to which they meet the elements of each criterion.

The program criteria (with total available points) and elements are:

Points	Proposal Section
35	Project Purpose
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates alignment with NYS Program Priorities • Addresses important NYS Specialty Crop problem or opportunity • Clearly explains a solution/practice change that is aligned with the direction of the marketplace • Acknowledges the role of economics in the development or potential adoption of solution/practice changes • Describes the likelihood of the proposed solution/practices change to be adopted by farmers • Describes any limitations to proposed solution/practice change • Addresses the limitations or benefits of other work in the same research area and how this project differs or builds upon existing research
5	Target Beneficiaries
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes how the project leader(s) understands the target beneficiaries and the potential scale of work proposed
15	External Project Support
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates industry support of the research and outcomes. • Demonstrates support from stakeholders directly impacted by the project
25	Workplan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes a well-organized and easy to understand workplan. • Demonstrates realistic proposed goals and discrete tasks that show a logical approach to project completion. • Provides deliverables that are comprehensive and far-reaching • Demonstrates the ability to complete the project goals within the project timeline. • Identifies notable new approaches to research methodologies and outcomes.
10	Data Collection.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly describes a complete data collection and measurement plan to report on the outcome and indicators identified. • Describes a data collection plan that measures all aspects of the project's work.
10	Resource Request
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget includes detail for all project components, is cost-effective, presents necessary and realistic costs. • Budget reflects an appropriate investment relative to the potential benefit of the work.
5	Bonus Points
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project will develop and increase the utilization of IPM strategies and programs to address pests and disease threats in NY specialty crops. • Project will provide research, demonstration, and training to develop, test, or increase adoption of innovative, specialized equipment for weed management.