FY2021 – H.R. 133

Wisconsin Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – COVID-19 Stimulus

Request for Proposals (RFP) & Grant Manual

Updated 9/9/21

Packet includes
General program information
Application instructions
Evaluation criteria

Application Due Date: 5:00pm, October 29, 2021

State of Wisconsin - Specialty Crop Block Grant Program: COVID-19 Stimulus
FY 2021 Grant Manual

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. General Information
A. Available Funds & Project Duration....3
B. Application and Funding Timing....3
C. Eligible Projects & Program Priority Areas....4
D. Eligible Specialty Crops....4
E. Ineligible Commodities....4
F. Eligible Applicants....4
G. Eligible Expenses....5
H. Ineligible Expenses....5
I. Matching Funds....6
J. General Compliance....6
K. Record Requirements....7
L. Monitoring....7
M. Liability....7
N. Open Records....7
O. Reporting Executive Compensation....7
P. Other Considerations....8

II. Application Instructions & Requirements
A. Required Application Format....8
B. Exclusions....13
C. Application Due Date....13
D. Contact Information....14
E. SCBGP Application Checklist....14

III. Grant Awards and Reporting
A. Application Evaluation....14
B. Notification of Award....14
C. Grant Award Agreement and Payments....14
D. Reporting Requirements....15

SCBGP Application Scoring Criteria....16

FY21 Wisconsin Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – COVID-19 Stimulus

Request for Proposals (RFP) & Grant Manual

I. General Information

CFDA (CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE) 10.170

In anticipation of receiving Specialty Crop Block Grant - COVID-19 Stimulus Funds from the USDA, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WI DATCP) is announcing a competitive solicitation process to award USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBG) funds for projects that **solely** enhance the competitiveness of Wisconsin's specialty crop industries. Selected applications will be included into one Wisconsin state plan and submitted to the USDA for final approval.

This program is authorized 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). SCBGP is currently implemented under 7 CFR § 1291 (published March 27, 2009; 74 FR 13313).

Wis. Stat. ss 20.115(3)(m).

A. Available Funds and Project Duration

Wisconsin Specialty Crop Block Grant – COVID-19 program funds will be distributed to the specialty crop industry through a competitive review process. Competitive grants will be awarded for projects between **$10,000** and **$100,000**. SCBG-COVID-19 grant funds will be awarded for projects up to **3 years, 2 months** in duration and must conclude by **June 30, 2025**. Applications that build on a previously funded SCBG project are welcomed. In such cases, the application should clearly indicate how the project complements but does not duplicate previous work.

More than one project application per applicant may be submitted. Projects may be submitted by a single organization or for combined specialty crop efforts. Multi-state projects are also eligible to address a growing need for solutions to problems that cross state boundaries. A multi-state project is a project proposed to two or more states requesting that the states fund separate budget items but achieve the same goals and outcomes. Multi-state project applicants should clearly describe the multi-state nature of their project and identify the other states from which funds will be requested. Contact the SCBG Program Manager for additional application instructions on multi-state proposals.

B. Application & Funding Timing

WI DATCP is requesting proposals for the fiscal year 2021 grant cycle in anticipation of USDA releasing SCBG-COVID-19 funds to states. Selected grant projects will not be able to begin project activity and incur eligible project expenses until approval has been received and contracts have been signed between WI DATCP and the grantee. Anticipated project timelines include a start date no earlier than – **February-April, 2022** and completion no later than **June 30, 2025**.

<u>Timeline</u>

RFP is released	September 9, 2021
Applications due to WI DATCP	October 29, 2021
Applications scored and selected by review committee	November 2021
Selected applicants notified by WI DATCP	December 2021
Specific project applications submitted to USDA	December 2021

Anticipated USDA Approval	February-April, 2022
Contracts Issued by WI DATCP	October/November 2022
Project start date	November 2022
All projects conclude	June 30, 2025

C. Eligible Projects – Program Priority Areas

- To be eligible for a grant, the project(s) must solely enhance the competitiveness of Wisconsin grown specialty crops and cannot benefit any non-specialty crops. Priority will be given to projects that have the potential to provide solutions that lead to measurable benefits to specialty crop growers and consumers.
- **Grant funds will not be awarded for projects that provide profit to or directly benefit a specific commercial product or a single organization, institution, business, or individual.** For example, the program will not fund a project to start or expand a farm or business venture.
- Projects must include a plan to disseminate project results to the targeted industry.
- Projects may also be funded that respond specifically to COVID-19

For FY21, WI DATCP will accept applications pertaining to the following priority areas:

2021 Funding Priorities

- Environmental sustainability, pest and disease control, & varietal improvement
- Development of food safety practices, outreach, and education that assist with compliance with the Food Safety Modernization Act, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP) certification.
- Increasing the demand for and supply of Wisconsin specialty crops
- Industry innovation in production, processing, packaging, and distribution
- Education for producers, processors, and the general public to improve production practices, or increase sales or consumption of Wisconsin specialty crops

D. Eligible Specialty Crops

Specialty crops are defined in law as "fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops, including floriculture." The USDA maintains a more comprehensive list of eligible specialty crops on its website that will be updated as USDA gets new questions. See: https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp/specialty-crop

E. Ineligible Commodities

Grains and animal products top the list of non-specialty crops. The USDA maintains a list of ineligible crops on its website. See: https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp/specialty-crop

F. Eligible Applicants

Proposed projects must include documented support by the impacted specialty crop growers or industry sector. This may be illustrated by support from industry sector organizations or by individual letters of support from growers or processers.

Proposals will be accepted from non-profit organizations, producer organizations, government agencies, universities, and other organizations involved in Wisconsin agriculture. Individual producers, for-profit businesses and commercial entities may only apply if their project can demonstrate a significant benefit to the specialty crop industry regionally, statewide or beyond. Proposals may involve collaborations or

partnerships between producers, industry, academia or agricultural organizations. Applicants may cooperate with any public or private organization.

Projects cannot include non-specialty crops even if other funding is used to pay for the non-specialty crop portion of the project.

All applicants must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. DUNS number means the nine-digit number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. (D&B) to uniquely identify business entities. A DUNS number may be obtained from D&B by telephone (currently 866-705-5711) or the Internet (http://www.dnb.com/get-a-duns-number.html). Obtaining a number is free and no fees are involved.

G. Eligible Expenses - Allowable Costs

This is a reimbursement grant. Grant funds will be paid to recipients for approved expenditures on a ***reimbursement basis***. Grant recipients must have the financial capability to pay project expenses up-front, and may request reimbursement monthly.

All costs must be associated with project activities that enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

- State, local or Indian tribal governments, non-profit organizations, colleges and universities will be subject to 2 CFR 200. http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=898fdaa0b947dd0bf8c962a137d230dd&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5
- For-profit organizations will be subject to 48 CFR Subpart 31.2. http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=9b6facc60293cad8d7dd87f703f5f2fe&rgn=div6&view=text&node=48:1.0.1.5.30.2&idno=48

Eligible project expenses include, but are not limited to:

- ***Compensation for Personnel Services***
  - Salaries, wages and fringe benefits
- ***Consultant Services or Subcontractors***
  - Costs of professional and consultant services rendered by persons who are members of a particular profession or possess a special skill.
- ***Materials and Supplies***
  - Costs incurred for materials, supplies, and fabricated parts necessary to carry out the grant project. Purchased materials and supplies shall be charged at their actual prices, net of applicable credits. Supplies are items with individual cost of less than $5000 or depreciation of less than one year.
- ***Travel***
  - Mileage reimbursement following federal requirements for reimbursement rates, vehicle rental, or airfare.
- ***Equipment and other Capital Expenditures***
  - Lease/rental costs
- ***Other Miscellaneous Costs***
  - For example: meetings, publications, printing, postage, etc.

For COVID-19 stimulus related projects, costs may be considered *allowable* for individual businesses and producers, as well as nonprofit and community-based organizations, with prior approval. Such projects may include funding individual producers, businesses or nonprofit or community-based organizations who wish to:

- Purchase and provide certain supplies (including PPE) costing less than $5000 per unit.
- Make certain facility adjustments (Rearrangement and Reconversion Costs) to protect employees and their public from potential COVID-19 exposure.
- Implement market adaptations related to COVID-19 for projects that benefit a variety of businesses.

H. Ineligible Expenses

Unallowable costs/expenses include:

- ***Capital Expenditures for Equipment, Buildings, and Land***
    - Equipment is any single item that costs $5000 or more and has a depreciation of more than one year.
- ***Bad Debts***
- ***Lobbying, Political and Other Governmental Activities***
- ***Advertising and Public Relations costs***
    - Costs designed solely to promote the image of an organization, general logo, or general brand rather than eligible specialty crops are unallowable. For example:
        - A promotional campaign to increase sales of "XYZ Grown" Watermelon is acceptable while increasing brand awareness of "XYZ Grown" generically is not.
        - Promoting tomatoes while including an organization's logo in the promotion is acceptable, while generally promoting an organization's logo is not.

- ***Entertainment and Alcohol***
    - Alcoholic beverages except when the costs are associated with enhancing the competitiveness of specific specialty crops and prior approval is given from the awarding agency.
    - Amusement, diversion, and social activities and any costs directly associated with such costs (such as tickets to shows or sports events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, and gratuities) are not allowed.
    - Food for meals, snacks and general refreshment for conferences, trainings or entertainment.
- ***Travel Costs***
    - Travel expenses related to overnight accommodations such as hotels and meals or per diem expenses
- ***Other Expenses***
    - Contributions to a contingency reserve or any similar provision.
    - Fines, penalties, damages, and other settlements resulting from violations (or alleged violations) of, or failure of the governmental unit to comply with, Federal, State, local, or Indian tribal laws and regulations.
    - Organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions regardless of the purpose for which the funds will be used.
    - Costs of goods or services for personal use of the governmental unit's employees regardless of whether the cost is reported as taxable income to the employees.

- Costs of investment counsel and staff and similar expenses incurred to enhance income from investments.
- Grant funds shall supplement the expenditure of State funds in support of specialty crops grown in that State, rather than replace State funds.
- Indirect (administrative support) costs & tuition.

I. Matching Funds

Matching funds are not required.

J. Federal Cost Principles

Federal cost principles are regulations based on organization type used to determine allowable costs and ensure consistent treatment of costs. Applicants are responsible for identifying the federal cost principles appropriate to their organization and for the consistent application of cost principles to the SCBGP grant funds. Applicants are responsible for ensuring contractors or consultants comply with applicable federal cost principle requirements.

State, local or tribal governments, non-profit organizations, colleges and universities will be subject to 2 CFR 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. For-profit organizations will be subject to 48 CFR Subpart 31.2. All organization types are subject to 7 CFR 3015 and 7 CFR 3052.

K. Record Requirements

The grantee will be responsible for setting up and maintaining a project file that contains all records of correspondence with WI DATCP, receipts, invoices and copies of all reports and documents associated with the project. The grantee shall retain all data and other records relating to the acquisition and performance of the Grant Award Agreement for a period of four years after the completion of the agreement. All records shall be subject to inspection and audit by state personnel at reasonable times. Upon request, the grantee shall produce a legible copy of any or all such records.

L. Monitoring

WI DATCP reserves the right to perform site-monitoring visits to any and all grantees to ensure that work is progressing within the required period and that fiscal procedures are followed accurately and appropriately. Monitoring includes both financial and program information, as well as site visits.

M. Liability

WI DATCP will not be held liable for any costs incurred by any firm for work performed in the preparation and production of a proposal, nor for any work performed prior to the formal execution of the contract.

N. Open Records

Applications submitted for funding and all related contracts and reports shall be subject to disclosure under the Public Records law. If the grant applicant or recipient requests any information be deemed a trade secret, the document should be labeled using “trade secret” and the requested status should be noted to DATCP when the document is submitted. The department shall notify the grant recipient if a public records request is made for the information claimed to be trade secret by the grant recipient. Such information may be kept confidential by the department only as authorized by law (see s. 19.36(5), Wis. Stats.).

O. Reporting of Total Compensation of Executives

If you meet both of the criteria listed below, you will be required to report the names and total compensation of each of the five most highly compensated executives of your organization/ business for the preceding completed fiscal year upon receipt of your grant contract:

In your preceding fiscal year, your entity received--

- 80% or more of its annual gross revenues from Federal procurement contracts (and Subcontracts) and Federal financial assistance subject to the Transparency Act, as defined at 2 CFR 170.320; and
- $25,000,000 or more in annual gross revenues from Federal procurement contracts (and subcontracts), and Federal financial assistance subject to the Transparency Act (and sub-awards)

The public does not have access to information about the compensation of the executives through periodic reports filed under section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78m(a), 78o(d)) or section 6104 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. (To determine if the public has access to the compensation information, see the U.S. Security and Exchange Commission total compensation filings at http://www.sec.gov/answers/execomp.htm.)

P. Other Considerations

- All proposals submitted in response to this RFP become the property of WI DATCP. WI DATCP reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, otherwise use, and to authorize others to use materials produced under this grant agreement.

- Prospective applicants may submit comments, request information, or file a complaint related to Civil Rights concerns, via U.S. Mail to DATCP at the following address:

  Secretary
  Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
  2811 Agriculture Drive
  Madison, WI 53708

  Or

  Equity Inclusion Officer
  Bureau of Human Resources
  Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
  2811 Agriculture Drive
  Madison, WI 53708

WI DATCP also reserves the right to:

- Post funded proposals or final reports to the WI DATCP website
- Reject any or all proposals received
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification and agreement of applicant
- Clarify the scope of this program, within the RFP requirement and with appropriate notice to potential applicants, to best serve the interests of the State of Wisconsin

- Amend program specifications after their release, with appropriate written notice to potential applicants
- Require a good faith effort on the part of the project sponsor to work with WI DATCP subsequent to project completion to develop or implement project results in Wisconsin
- Withhold any payments when contract conditions are not met

II. Application Instructions & Requirements

A. Required Application Format

Applications must be completed using the application template that is posted on the WI DATCP website - http://datcp.wi.gov search *Specialty Crop Block Grant 2021-COVID-19 Stimulus*. If you cannot access the site or have trouble filling out the application, please contact the Ryan Dunn at ryand.dunn@wisconsin.gov or 608-590-7239.

***Proposals will only be accepted using the DATCP application saved as a word document.* No PDF documents**

- Proposals should not exceed 10 pages in length. (Does not include attachments or letters of support.)
- WI DATCP must receive an electronic copy of the proposal by the stated deadline – **5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 24, 2021**.

Application includes:

1. **Cover Page** – Each application must include the completed Application Cover Page, including contact information for the applicant administering the project under contract with WI DATCP, a title that describes the project, DUNS number, and check appropriate boxes. Please use the form provided. Do not modify its format and do not make your own form.

2. **Project Description** – Provide a **one-sentence** description including the following information:
   - *The name of the applicant*
   - *A concise outline of the project's expected outcome(s), and*
   - *A description of the general tasks to be completed during the project period to fulfill this goal.*

FOR EXAMPLE:
The ABC University will mitigate the spread of citrus greening (Huanglongbing) by developing scientifically based practical measures to implement a quarantine area and disseminate results to stakeholders through grower meetings and field days.

3. **Project Purpose** – Use this section to explain your project and its importance
   - Provide the specific Issue, problem or need that the project will address
   - Provide a listing of the objectives this project hopes to achieve

4. **Project Beneficiaries** –
   - Who are the beneficiaries of the project?
   - Provide an estimated number of how many beneficiaries will be impacted

5. **Project Continuation Information** If your project is continuing the efforts of a previously funded SCBGP project, address the following:
   - Describe how this project will build upon and differ from the previous project
   - Summarize the outcomes (or potential outcomes) of the previous efforts (3-5 sentences)
   - Provide lessons learned on potential project improvements
     - What was previously learned from implementing this project, including potential improvements?
     - How are the lessons learned and improvements being incorporated into the project to make the ongoing project more effective and successful at meeting goals and outcomes?
   - Describe the likelihood of the project becoming self-sustaining and not depending on grant funding indefinitely

6. **Other Project Funding** - The SCBG will not fund duplicative projects. If you submitted this project to a funding source other than the SCBG for funding and/or the project is currently funded through another source, identify the funding and describe how your project differs from or supplements the other funded project or how you will modify this project or return funds for any duplicative efforts.

7. **External Project Support** - Describe the specialty crop stakeholders who support this project and why (other than the applicant and organizations directly involved in the project implementation).

8. **Expected Measurable Outcomes** –Each project submitted must include at least one of the outcomes listed below, and at least one of the indicators listed underneath the selected outcome(s). If there are multiple sub-indicators under the selected indicator, select at least one and be sure to identify numeric values for indicators where required.

**Once you have chosen the outcome and defined the indicator, explain how you will collect the required data to report on the outcome and indicator. (Grower, participant or beneficiary web survey, written evaluation after educational presentation, identification through one on one personal meetings, etc.)

Program Activity: Marketing and Promotion
Outcome 1: To enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increased sales (mandatory for all marketing/promotion projects)
Indicator: Sales increased from $_____ to $_____ and by _____ percent, as result of marketing and/or promotion activities.

This requirement means that an established baseline of sales in dollars should already exist at the time of application. For projects that do not already have a baseline of sales in dollars, one of the objectives of the project must be to determine such a baseline in order to meet the requirement to document the value of sales increases by the end of the project.

Sample outcome with indicator and data collection plan:
Outcome 1: *To enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increased sales (purchases)*

Indicator: Sales (purchases) increase by 10% percent, as result of marketing and/or promotion activities.

One of the first project objectives will be to work with project partner participants to determine a purchasing baseline in dollar value of products purchased (sales value). Once established, we propose

purchasing will increase by at least 10% when assessed again at the end of the project. We will report this sales value baseline and the projected final purchase (sales value) amount in the first annual report submitted in fall, 2019.

Program Activity: Research, Innovation, and Education

Outcome 3: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increased access and awareness

Indicators:

1. Of the _____total number of consumers or wholesale buyers reached,

a. The number that gained knowledge on how to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops

b. The number that reported an intention to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops

c. The number that reported supplementing their diets with specialty crops that they produced/preserved/obtained/prepared

2. Of the ____total number of individuals (culinary professionals, institutional kitchens, specialty crop entrepreneurs such as kitchen incubators/shared-use kitchens, etc.) reached,

a. The number that gained knowledge on how to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops

b. The number that reported an intention to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops

c. The number that reported supplementing their diets with specialty crops that they produced/prepared/preserved/obtained

3. Number of existing delivery systems/access points of those reached that expanded and/or improved offerings of specialty crops (choose only those that apply and provide an estimated number).

a. _____farmers markets

b. _____produce at corner stores

c. _____school food programs and other food options (vending machines, school events, etc.)

d. _____grocery stores

e. _____wholesale markets

f. _____food hubs that process, aggregate, distribute, or store specialty crops

g. _____home improvement centers with lawn and garden centers

h. _____lawn and garden centers

i. _____other systems/access points, not noted

j. _____total (if not reported above)

4. Number of new delivery systems/access points offering specialty crops

a. _____farmers markets

b. _____produce at corner stores

c. _____school food programs and other food options (vending machines, school events, etc.)

d. _____grocery stores

e. _____wholesale markets

f. _____ food hubs that process, aggregate, distribute, or store specialty crops

g. _____home improvement centers with lawn and garden centers

h. _____lawn and garden centers

i. _____other systems/access points, not noted

j. _____total (if not reported above)

Sample outcome with indicator and data collection plan:

Outcome 3: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increased awareness

Indicators:

1. Of the 5000 total number of individuals (early care and education providers and support staff) reached, we expect:

a. The number that gained knowledge on how to access specialty crops: 80% of survey respondents

b. The number that gained knowledge on how to prepare specialty crops: 80% of survey respondents

c. The number that reported an intention to begin or to increase access and preparation of specialty crops: 80% of survey respondents

Increased awareness will be measured through online and in-person evaluations, both when accessing the project tool and as a part of the training series. All in-person trainings will include pre/post evaluations assessing changes in knowledge for accessing and preparing Wisconsin-grown specialty crops.

Program Activity: Research, Innovation, and Education

Outcome 4: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops though 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.

Indicators:

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 _____

e. Number of habitat acres established and maintained for the mutual benefit of pollinators and specialty crops_____

Sample outcome with indicator and data collection plan:

Outcome 4: Enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops though 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

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 intent to adopt recommended practices __50%__

*** Due to the timing of this project, growers will not have time to actually adopt practices before the end of the project. We will release results and make presentations to growers and will survey them to report*

intent to adopt the recommended practices. The grant will terminate before any growers have the ability to implement project results.

Program Activity: Research, Innovation, and Education
Outcome 5: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through more sustainable, diverse, and resilient specialty crop systems
Indicators:
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, processors, 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 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 _____

Sample outcome with indicator and data collection plan:
Outcome 5: Enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops through more sustainable, diverse, and resilient specialty crop systems.

8. Number of growers/producers that gained knowledge about science-based tools through outreach and education programs __80%__

Evaluation forms at selected conferences and field days will be provided to evaluate the relevance and impact of this research. Growers will be reached through articles in the grower newsletters and reports to Grower Associations. We will create a survey suite to evaluate the number of growers and producers that gained knowledge on monitoring methods, general management practices, and more specifically on cultural controls for managing this pest and impact on product quality.

Program Activity: Food Safety Development
Outcome 6: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increasing the number of viable technologies to improve food safety
Indicators:
1. Number of viable technologies developed or modified for the detection and characterization of specialty crop supply contamination from foodborne threats ____
2. Number of viable prevention, control and intervention strategies for all specialty crop production scales for foodborne threats along the production continuum_____
3. Number of individuals who learn about prevention, detection, control, and intervention food safety practices and number of those individuals who increase their food safety skills and knowledge_____

4. Number of improved prevention, detection, control, and intervention technologies_____
5. Number of reported changes in prevention, detection, control, and intervention strategies_____

Sample outcome with indicator and data collection plan:
Outcome 6: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increasing the number of viable technologies to improve food safety

Indicators 3. Number of individuals who learn about prevention, detection, control, and intervention food safety practices and number of those individuals who increase their food safety skills and knowledge_80%_

We will use pre- and post- surveys at each of our food safety trainings to assess the percent of attendees who increase their knowledge and skills.

Program Activity: Food Safety Development
Outcome 7: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increased understanding of threats to food safety from microbial and chemical sources
Indicators:
Number of projects focused on:
1. Increased understanding of fecal indicators and pathogens _____
2. Increased safety of all inputs into the specialty crop chain _____
3. Increased understanding of the roles of humans, plants and animals as vectors _____
4. Increased understanding of pre-harvest and post-harvest process impacts on microbial and chemical threats _____
5. Number of growers or producers obtaining on-farm food safety certifications (such as Good Agricultural Practices or Good Handling Practices) _____

Sample outcome with indicator and data collection plan:
***Outcome 7**: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through increased understanding of threats to food safety from microbial and chemical sources*

Indicator 2: Increased safety of all inputs into the specialty crop chain _ 3__

This project will develop three separate initiatives to increase food safety in specific ares of the specialty crop chain. Each of the three endeavors will produce a manual including all aspects of the program and its implementation as a final deliverable.

Program Activity: All
Outcome 8: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through enhancing or improving the economy as a result of specialty crop development.
Indicators:
1. Number of new rural careers created _____
2. Number of new urban careers created _____
3. Number of jobs maintained/created_____
4. Number of small businesses maintained/created _____
5. Increased revenue/increased savings/one time capital purchases (in dollars) _____
6. Number of new beginning farmers who went into specialty crop production _____
7. Number of socially disadvantaged famers who went into specialty crop production _____

Sample outcome with indicator and data collection plan:

Outcome 8*: Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through enhancing or improving the economy as a result of specialty crop development.*

Indicators 6: Number of new beginning farmers who went into specialty crop production _10____
Indicators 7: Number of socially disadvantaged famers who went into specialty crop production __2__

During the project, all workshop participants and beginning farmer clients will be tracked. At the end of the project program, a client satisfaction survey will be completed by each participant, and those going into production will be counted.

9. **Work Plan** – The following information should be included in this section.

- Identify the activities necessary to accomplish the project objectives.
- Indicate who will do the work of each activity and how they are qualified to do this work. If collaborative arrangements or subcontracts are used, make sure you specify their role and responsibilities in performing project activities.
- Include timelines for accomplishing each activity. Make sure to include the months/year(s) each activity will occur.
- Include plan for disseminating project results as detailed in *Expected Measurable Outcomes* (Section 5 above)

The work plan section may be in any format you choose as long as it contains the appropriate information. We find that the table provided in the application is a good way to include all necessary items. Additional information is not necessary if using the table.

10. Budget Summary & Narrative -The budget should contain a table summary and a narrative for each project cost item.

- ***Personnel*** – Persons employed by the grantee organization to work on the project should be listed in this category. The duties must be directly related to the project application. For each paid project participant, indicate title, percent of full time equivalents to be spent on the project (FTE) or number of hours to be spent on grant, and corresponding salary for the FTE. Include an explanation of each individual's duties/responsibilities for the project. Individuals not employed by your organization should be included under *Contractual*.
- ***Fringe Benefits*** - Provide the rate of fringe benefits for each project participant's salary described in the personnel section.
- ***Equipment*** – Equipment is considered items of property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more per item. If the cost is under $5,000, then include these items under supplies. Only equipment rental or depreciation can be charged to the grant. Anything classified as an equipment purchase is **not** an allowable cost for this grant program.
- ***Supplies*** – List all items with acquisition cost under $5,000. This includes anything from office supplies and software to educational or field supplies. **Be specific**, list all items you intend to purchase. For non-typical materials & supply items, include a brief narrative of how the items fit with the project.
    - For example, *Office supplies such as pens, paper, toner, etc. - $500*
      Gardening supplies such as soil and fertilizer - $500

- ***Travel –*** Mileage reimbursement following federal requirements for reimbursement rates***,*** vehicle rental, or airfare are allowed.
  - Hotel, meal and other per diem costs are not eligible for reimbursement.
  - Travel costs for individuals not employed by the applicant organization must be listed under Contractual.
  - Travel costs are limited to those allowed by formal organizational policy; project participants must use the lowest reasonable commercial airfares for air travel. 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 subsistence rates prescribed in those regulations. This information is available at http://www.gsa.gov.
  - Provide the following information for each trip:
    - Trip destination
    - Purpose of trip
    - Type of expense (airfare, car rental, mileage, etc.)
    - Number of days traveling
    - Estimated number of miles and mileage rate
    - Estimated ground transportation costs
    - Number of travelers claiming expense
    - Total funds requested for each expense
- ***Contractual*** – Provide a short description of the services each contract covers and include the flat rate fee OR the total hourly rate fee for each contract.
  - Contractual hourly rates cannot exceed GS-15 step 10 for your area. To access the GS-15 step 10 rate, visit the website below and click on 2015 General Schedule and Locality Pay Tables. http://www.federaljobs.net/salarybase.htm. If contractor employee and consultant hourly rates of pay exceed the salary of a GS-15 step 10 Federal employee in your area, provide a justification for the expenses.
  - You must indicate that all contractual work on the grant will follow your organization's procurement practices.
- ***Other*** – Provide a detailed description of all other direct costs such as:
  - Conferences/Meeting - Costs of holding a conference or meeting are included in this category. *Food/refreshments for conferences/meetings are not eligible costs for this grant. Only conferences with direct impact on specialty crop producers, processors or intended grant beneficiaries are allowed.
  - Communications - Mailings, postage, express mail, faxes, and telephone long distance charges. Provide the estimated cost for this category. Note that you must prove these expenses are for grant project only and do not include costs for non-grant expenses. For example, if phone expenses are charged by a staff member who also uses the phone for non-grant activities, you must prove that the expenses charged to the grant do not include those activities. Just estimating a % of use is not acceptable.
  - Speaker/Trainer Fees - Provide the amount of the speaker's fees and a description of the services they are providing. (if you choose not to put this in the contractual section)
  - Publication Costs - Provide the estimated cost of printing of brochures and other program and outreach materials.
  - Data Collection - Provide the estimated cost of collecting performance data to measure the project outcome measures.
- ***Project Income*** - Project income is not allowed. If your project cannot be implemented without generating income, do not apply.

- ***Matching Funds*** –are not required.

11. Letters of Support – should be used to assist in demonstrating external support for your project. Be sure to request letters of support from stakeholders and beneficiaries early in your application process, especially if it is an organization such as a state grower group who may have to get board approval to submit a letter of support. The failure to submit letters of support by the application due date may lead to unfavorable treatment of an application, including, but not limited to, non-selection of an application.

12. Scoring Criteria – be sure to look at the scoring criteria on the last page of the RFP. Make sure to address all the scoring criteria in your application. Some scoring requirements may not be directly addressed in the application sections so be sure to address everything somewhere in your application.

B. Exclusions

In accordance with provisions of the Hatch Act (U.S.C. 1501-1508 and 7324-7326), grant funds may not be used to fund political activities.

C. Application Due Date

WI DATCP must receive completed applications no later than **5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 24, 2021**. Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted. Changes to your application or additional submissions will not be allowed unless specifically requested by the review committee. It is highly recommended you request and receive confirmation your application was received on time.

D. Contact Information

Applications must be emailed to: ryand.dunn@wisconsin.gov
For questions, contact Juli via email or at 608-590-7239.

E. Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Checklist

Each submission must use the application format provided in **MS Word**, which includes:

- Cover Page (electronic signature is acceptable)
- Complete Project Proposal that details:
  1. Project Description
  2. Project Purpose
  3. Project Beneficiaries
  4. Project Continuation Information
  5. Other Project Funding
  6. External Project Support
  7. Expected Measurable Outcomes
  8. Work Plan
  9. Budget Summary and Narrative
- Letters of Support

III. Grant Awards and Reporting

A. Application Evaluation Process

All applications will be reviewed by a team of WI DATCP and external reviewers after the grant application submittal deadline. The external review committee is made up of growers, industry, universities, public agencies and representatives from non-profits with an interest and expertise in

specialty crops and agricultural systems. Applications are evaluated on the merits of the proposals based on the scoring criteria listed on the last page of the RFP. Final decisions may include other factors such as how projects address proposal priorities, total amount of funding each applicant, crop and/or industry is receiving, geographic location of project beneficiaries, and past recipient performance on previous Specialty Crop Block Grants.

Applicants will be notified during the review process if adjustments to the application's scope of work and/or project budgets are necessary. WI DATCP will notify applicants after the review process whether or not their proposal was selected for submission to USDA. Proposals that are approved by WI DATCP will be included in the Wisconsin State Plan, which will be submitted, to USDA AMS in May 2021 for approval.

B. Notification of Award

Upon approval of the Wisconsin State Plan by USDA AMS, applicants will be notified as to whether or not they received a grant award. Successful applicants will also be sent a Grant Award Agreement to sign. WI DATCP anticipates that grant awards and notification will be made in March or April of 2022.

C. Grant Award Agreement and Payment

Prior to beginning work on the proposed project or spending any funds, each successful applicant will be required to sign a Grant Award Agreement with the WI DATCP indicating their intention to complete the proposed tasks and authorizing WI DATCP to monitor the progress of the proposed project.

Grant Award Agreements must be signed and returned to WI DATCP within 30 days of receipt. Failure to submit an executed copy of the Grant Award Agreement within 30 days of receipt may result in the loss of awarded grant funds, unless the delay is approved by WI DATCP.

Requests for reimbursements will be accepted monthly. Each reimbursement request must include an itemized invoice, documentation of the work, and proof of paid expenses. Itemization shall include the purpose, amount and date incurred.

To receive reimbursement, grantees must provide assurance that the work has been completed (i.e. include receipts, paid invoices) and clearly outline expenditures on the Request for Reimbursement Form. Twenty percent of the total grant funds will be retained until receipt of the completed final report including receipts for all expenditures.

D. Reporting Requirements and Budget Adjustments

WI DATCP reserves the right to modify reporting requirements during the course of the project. All progress and final reports must be submitted using the required format.

Progress Reports – Each grantee is required to submit a progress report once a year during the grant period, usually at the end of September or October. The report due date is set in the Grant Award Agreement. These reports shall summarize project activities and progress made since the last report submitted, timeliness of project (ahead or behind proposed timeline), externalities that effected progress/delays, expectations for the next period and a summary of costs and reimbursement requested. WI DATCP reserves the right to adjust report dates.

Final Reports - A **final performance report** will be required within 60 days following the end date of the grant agreement. The final report will be posted on the USDA-AMS and WI DATCP web sites and is

important for sharing project findings with Federal and State agencies and the public. In addition to the final project report, WI DATCP reserves the right to conduct a follow-up survey of funded projects in order to determine long-term impacts of the project.

Reporting Compliance – Applicants who do not submit progress and annual reports on time, and/or submit incomplete reports, may be required to return all previously disbursed funds to WI DATCP and/or may be removed from future funding opportunities.

Budget Adjustments - If a material change (20% of total grant budget or greater) in the budget is needed during the project period, a written request must be made to WI DATCP to reallocate budget funds between budget categories. However, the total budget amount as dictated by the approved grant award cannot be adjusted.

Wisconsin
FY2021 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – COVID-19 Stimulus
Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Points Received
1.Grant Application	5	
• Is the project well organized, thought out, and explained in a way that makes sense and sounds like it can be carried out successfully?		
2. Project Purpose	20	
• How well does the applicant define the need for and purpose of the project? • Are the project objectives clear and appropriate? • Is the project important and timely?		
3. Potential Impact and Industry Support	20	
• Does the project have a positive impact on the targeted specialty crop industry? Will it be effective at enhancing the competitiveness of that industry? • Does the number benefiting justify the investment? • Is it apparent that the project is important to and supported by the impacted specialty crop industry? • Will industry be actively involved in the project?		
4. Expected Measurable Outcomes	20	
• Did the applicant select one of the specific required outcomes and associated indicators provided in the RFP? • Did the applicant explain how the project will accomplish the outcome measure(s) and indicator(s)? • Does the project seem likely to achieve the outcome measures? • Are the chosen outcome(s) relevant to the program priorities and connected to the overall proposal?		
5. Work Plan	10	
• Do the tasks seem appropriate to complete the project objectives • Do the activities relate to the expected measurable outcomes? • Is the timeline reasonable?		
6. Budget and Narrative	15	
• Is the amount requested reasonable? Are line items reasonable and appropriate? • Does the budget narrative adequately explain the line items?		
BONUS	10	
• Does the project make an effort to reach underserved populations? Does it explain how? • Does the project directly respond to COVID-19 impacts? Does it explain how?		
TOTAL	100	
COMMENTS:		