



# 2025 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Request for Proposals (RFP)

**Proposals must be received by 10:00 a.m. central time on Monday, June 09, 2025**

More information on the Specialty Crop Block Grants and application materials are available on the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) website at:

<https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/AgDevelopment/SpecialtyCropBlockGrants.aspx>

# 2025 Wisconsin Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

## Request for Proposals (RFP)

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# I. General Information

## ASSISTANCE LISTING NUMBER 10.170

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WI DATCP) is announcing a competitive solicitation process to award the United States Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Marketing Service (USDA-AMS), Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) funds for projects that **solely** enhance the competitiveness of Wisconsin's specialty crop industries. Selected applications will be included in one Wisconsin state plan and submitted to the USDA-AMS for final approval.

This program is authorized under section 101 of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 (7 U.S.C. § 1621 note) as amended under section 10107 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, Public Law 115-343 (the Farm Bill).

### A. Available Funds and Project Duration

Wisconsin SCBGP 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. Applications that build on a previously funded SCBGP 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 organizations, institutions, or individuals, either alone or together as project partners. 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 funded by two or more states that implements activities with measurable outcomes that benefit two or more U.S. States and/or Territories. Multi-state project applicants should clearly describe the multi-state nature of their project and identify the other states or territories who will contribute toward the shared costs of the project. Contact the SCBG Program Manager for additional application instructions on multi-state proposals.

Project funding is contingent on funding for the SCBGP being made available by USDA-AMS.

### B. Application and Funding Timing

WI DATCP is requesting proposals for the fiscal year 2025 grant cycle. 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.

Activity	Date
RFP is released	May 13, 2025
Applications due to WI DATCP	June 09, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.
Applications scored and selected by review committee	June 2025
State application submitted to USDA	July 2025
Anticipated USDA Approval	Late 2025
Contracts Issued by WI DATCP	Late 2025
Project start date	Early 2026
All projects conclude	June 30, 2028 ( <i>Anticipated</i> )

## 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 outcomes for the specialty crop industry and the public.
- Grant funds will not be awarded for projects whose products or services promote or provide profit that solely benefits a single organization, institution, business, or individual. Funds also cannot be used to compete unfairly with companies that provide equivalent goods and services.
- Projects must include a plan to disseminate project results to the targeted industry.
- 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 processors.

For 2025, WI DATCP will accept applications pertaining to the following priority areas:

- Enhancing food safety
- Improving the capacity of all entities in the specialty crop distribution chain to comply with the requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act (21 U.S.C. Chapter 27), for example, developing “Good Agricultural Practices,” “Good Handling Practices,” “Good Manufacturing Practices,” and in cost-share arrangements for funding audits of such systems (including USDA GroupGAP) for small farmers, packers and processors
- Investing in specialty crop research, including research to focus on conservation and environmental outcomes
- Developing new and improved seed varieties and specialty crops
- Pest and disease control
- Increasing child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops
- Improving efficiency and reducing costs of distribution systems
- Sustainability

## 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

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 apply only 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 Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). The UEI has replaced the DUNS number as the primary means of entity identification for Federal awards government-wide. A UEI may be obtained by visiting [sam.gov](https://sam.gov). Obtaining a number is free.

## G. Eligible Expenses - Allowable Costs

This is a reimbursement grant. Grant funds will be paid to recipients for approved expenditures on a reimbursement basis after a contract is fully executed. Grant recipients must have the financial capability to pay project expenses upfront, and may request reimbursement monthly. To read more about eligible and ineligible expenses, please refer to [USDA-AMS's General Terms and Conditions](#).

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

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 a per-unit acquisition cost of less than \$10,000 or a useful life of less than one year.
- Travel
  - Mileage reimbursement following federal requirements for reimbursement rates, vehicle rental, or airfare.
  - Includes overnight accommodations as long as it furthers the purpose of the project.
- Equipment and other Capital Expenditures
  - Lease/rental costs
- Other Miscellaneous Costs
  - For example: meetings, publications, printing, postage, etc.

## H. Ineligible Expenses

Unallowable costs/expenses include:

- Capital Expenditures for Equipment, Buildings, and Land

- Equipment is any single item which costs \$10,000 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.
  - A promotional campaign to increase sales of “XYZ Grown” Watermelon is allowable while increasing brand awareness of “XYZ Grown” generically is not.
  - Promoting tomatoes while including an organization’s logo in the promotion is allowable 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).
- 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 and tuition.

## I. Matching Funds

Matching funds are not required.

## J. Federal Compliance Requirements

Grant recipients will be required to comply with all applicable provisions of [2 CFR 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#) and the [USDA-AMS General Terms and Conditions](#) (updated April 2025). Recipients will also be required to comply with all applicable federal statutes and regulations listed in USDA-AMS’s [General Terms and Conditions](#).

## 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 and federal 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 monitor grantees to ensure that work is progressing within the required period and that fiscal procedures are followed accurately and appropriately. Monitoring may include review of 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 or any work performed before the grant contract's performance period.

## N. Open Records

Applications submitted for funding, as well as all related contracts and reports shall be subject to disclosure under the Public Records Law, Wis. Stat. ch. 19, subch. II. If the grant applicant or recipient requests any information be deemed a trade secret, the document should be labeled "trade secret" and the requested status should be noted to WI DATCP when the document is submitted. WI DATCP will notify the grant recipient if a public records request is made for the information claimed to be a trade secret by the grant recipient. Such information may be kept confidential by WI DATCP only as authorized by law. See Wis. Stat. § 19.36(5).

## O. Reporting of Total Compensation of Executives

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

1. If, in the preceding fiscal year, your entity received—
  - a. 80 percent 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 subawards); and
  - b. \$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 subawards); and
2. 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 and Inclusion Officer  
Bureau of Human Resources  
Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection  
2811 Agriculture Drive  
Madison, WI 53708

- Civil rights complaints may also be filed with USDA by completing USDA Form AD-3027 or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. Forms and letters can be sent by mail to:

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington D.C. 20250-9410

Forms and letters can also be submitted by fax at (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

- 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 and recoup any payments when contract conditions are not met.



## II. Application Instructions and Requirements

### A. Required Application Format

Applications must be completed using the application templates that is posted on the WI DATCP website - <http://datcp.wi.gov> search Specialty Crop Block Grant 2025. If you cannot access the site or have trouble filling out the application, please contact Brian Williams at [DATCPDADGrants@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPDADGrants@wisconsin.gov) or (608) 590-7239.

- **WI DATCP will only accept proposals that use the WI DATCP application and are saved as a PDF. See the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Application Checklist for required documents for submission.**
- WI DATCP must receive an electronic copy of the proposal by the stated deadline – 10:00 a.m. on June 09, 2025.

#### Application includes:

1. **Cover Page** – Each application must include the completed Application Cover Page, including contact information for the applicant, a title that describes the project, and the applicant's UEI number. All appropriate boxes must be checked. Please use the form provided. Do not modify its format and do not make your own form.
2. **Project Title** – Provide a descriptive project title in 15 words or fewer in the space below.
3. **Project Summary** – 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.

4. **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. For each objective please include the events/activities this project will engage in to meet these objectives.
5. **Project Beneficiaries**
  - Who are the beneficiaries of the project?
  - Provide an estimated number or range of how many beneficiaries will be impacted.
6. **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.
    - i. What was previously learned from implementing this project, including potential improvements?

- ii. 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?
    - o Describe the likelihood of the project becoming self-sustaining and not relying indefinitely on grant funding.
- 7. **Other Project Funding** – The SCBGP will not fund duplicative projects. If you submitted this project to a funding source other than the SCBGP 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.
- 8. **External Project Support** – Describe the specialty crop stakeholders, other than the applicant and organizations directly involved in the project implementation, who support this project and why. In particular, please describe how the stakeholders will support the project. If an external partner has a role in the project, describe what that role is.
- 9. **Expected Measurable Outcomes** – Each project submitted must include at least one of the seven outcomes and at least one of the indicators to the corresponding selected outcome(s) listed below. 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. Copy and paste the associated indicators into the application, then enter an estimated number you will track.  
Describe the data collection to report on outcomes and indicators. This section needs to specify the following: when will data be collected, how will it be collected, what method will be used, who will be responsible for the collection, and how it will be analyzed. Outcome measures and the associated indicators were developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Office of Management and Budget and cannot be altered or amended in any way. Altering the language of the outcomes or indicators or providing responses in a format other than that described in the document will result in disqualification of a proposal.

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Outcome 1:</b> Increasing Consumption and Consumer Purchasing of Specialty Crops
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 1.1:</b> Total number of consumers who gained knowledge about specialty crops <a href="#">Enter number</a> . 1.1a Adults: <a href="#">Enter number</a> . 1.1b Children: <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 1.2:</b> Total number of consumers who consumed more specialty crops <a href="#">Enter number</a> . 1.2a Adults: <a href="#">Enter number</a> . 1.2b Children: <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 1.3:</b> Number of additional specialty crop customers counted <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 1.4:</b> Number of additional business transactions executed <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 1.5:</b> Increased sales measured in: 1.5a Dollars \$ <a href="#">Enter dollar amount</a> . 1.5b Percent change <a href="#">Enter number</a> . 1.5c Combination of volume and average price as a result of enhanced marketing activities: <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<b>Description of data collection methods:</b> <a href="#">Enter a description of the data collection methods that will be used to demonstrate progress toward achieving the Indicator.</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Outcome 2:</b> Increasing Access to Specialty Crops and Expanding Specialty Crop Production and Distribution

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 2.1:</b> Number of stakeholders that gained technical knowledge about producing, preparing, procuring, and/or accessing specialty crops <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 2.2:</b> Number of stakeholders that reported producing, preparing, procuring, and/or accessing more specialty crops <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 2.3:</b> Total number of market access points for specialty crops developed or expanded <a href="#">Enter number</a> . Of those: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.3a Number of new online portals created to sell specialty crops <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>2.3b Number with expanded seasonal availability <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>2.3c Number of existing market access points that expanded specialty crop offerings <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>2.3d Number of new market access points that established specialty crop offerings <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 2.4:</b> Number of stakeholders that gained knowledge about more efficient and effective distribution systems <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 2.5:</b> Number of stakeholders that adopted best practices or new technologies to improve distribution systems <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 2.6:</b> Total number of partnerships established between producers, distributors, and/or other relevant intermediaries related to distribution systems <a href="#">Enter number</a> . Of those established: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.6a Number formalized with written agreements (i.e. MOU's, signed contracts, etc.) <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 2.7:</b> Total number of new/improved distribution systems developed <a href="#">Enter number</a> . Of those, the number that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.7a Stemmed from new partnerships <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>2.7b Increased efficiency <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>2.7c Reduced costs <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>2.7d Increased specialty crop grower participation <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>2.7e Expanded customer reach <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>2.7f Increased online presence <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 2.8:</b> Number of specialty crop-related jobs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.8a Created <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>2.8b Maintained <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 2.9:</b> Number of market access points that reported increased: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.9a Revenue <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>2.9b Sales <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>2.9c Cost-savings <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Description of data collection methods:</b> <a href="#">Enter a description of the data collection methods that will be used to demonstrate progress toward achieving the selected Indicator(s) and Subindicator(s).</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Outcome 3:</b> Increase Food Safety Knowledge and Processes
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 3.1:</b> Number of stakeholders that gained knowledge about prevention, detection, control, and/or intervention food safety practices, including relevant regulations (to improve their ability to comply with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and/or meet the standards for aligned third party food safety audits such as Harmonized GAP/GHP) <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 3.2:</b> Number of stakeholders that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.2a Established a food safety plan <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>3.2b Revised or updated their food safety plan <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> </ul>

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 3.3:</b> Number of specialty crop stakeholders who implemented new/improved prevention, detection, control, and intervention practices, tools, or technologies to mitigate food safety risks (to improve their ability to comply with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and/or meet the standards for aligned third party food safety audits such as Harmonized GAP/GHP) <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 3.4:</b> Number of prevention, detection, control, or intervention practices developed or enhanced to mitigate food safety risks <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 3.5:</b> Number of stakeholders that used grant funds to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.5a Purchase <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>3.5b Upgrade food safety equipment <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Description of data collection methods:</b> <a href="#">Enter a description of the data collection methods that will be used to demonstrate progress toward achieving the selected Indicator(s) and Subindicator(s).</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Outcome 4:</b> Improve Pest and Disease Control Processes
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 4.1:</b> Number of stakeholders that gained knowledge about science-based tools to combat pests and diseases <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 4.2:</b> Number of stakeholders that adopted pest and disease control best practices, technologies, or innovations <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 4.3:</b> Number of stakeholders trained in early detection and rapid response practices to combat pests and diseases <a href="#">Enter number</a> . Of those: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.3a The number of additional acres managed using integrated pest management <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 4.4:</b> Number of stakeholders that implemented new diagnostic systems, methods, or technologies for analyzing specialty crop pests and diseases <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 4.5:</b> Total number of producers/processors that enhanced or maintained pest and disease control practices <a href="#">Enter number</a> . Of those, the number that reported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.5a Reduction in product lost to pest and diseases <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>4.5b Improved crop quality <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>4.5c Reduction in labor costs <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>4.5d Reduction in pesticide use <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 4.5:</b> Number of producers/processors improving the efficiency of pest and disease control diagnostics and response testing, as reported by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.6a Improving speed <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>4.6b Improving reliability <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>4.6c Expanding capability <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>4.6d Increasing testing (i.e. survey work for pests) <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Description of data collection methods:</b> <a href="#">Enter a description of the data collection methods that will be used to demonstrate progress toward achieving the selected Indicator(s) and Subindicator(s).</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Outcome 5:</b> Develop New Seed Varieties and Specialty Crops
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.1 Number of cultivar and/or variety trials conducted <a href="#">Enter number</a>. Of those:</li> <li>5.1 The number that advanced to further stages of development <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 5.2:</b> Number of cultivars and/or seed varieties developed <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 5.3:</b> Number of cultivars and/or seed varieties released <a href="#">Enter number</a> .

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 5.4:</b> Number of growers adopting new cultivars and/or varieties <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 5.5:</b> Number of acres planted with new cultivars and/or varieties <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<b>Description of data collection methods:</b> <a href="#">Enter a description of the data collection methods that will be used to demonstrate progress toward achieving the selected Indicator(s).</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Outcome 6:</b> Expand Specialty Crop Research and Development
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 6.1:</b> Number of research goals accomplished <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 6.2:</b> For research conclusions, the number that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.2a Yielded findings that supported continued research <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>6.2b Yielded findings that led to completion of study <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>6.2c Yielded findings that allow for implementation of new practice, process, or technology <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 6.3:</b> Number of industry representatives and other stakeholders who engaged with research results <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 6.4:</b> Total number of research outputs published to industry publications and/or academic journals <a href="#">Enter number</a> . For each published research output, the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.4a Number of views/reads of published research/data <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>6.4b Number of citations counted <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Description of data collection methods:</b> <a href="#">Enter a description of the data collection methods that will be used to demonstrate progress toward achieving the selected Indicator(s).</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Outcome 7:</b> Improve Environmental Sustainability of Specialty Crops
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 7.1:</b> Number of stakeholders that gained knowledge about environmental sustainability best practices, tools, or technologies <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 7.2:</b> Number of stakeholders reported with an intent to adopt environmental sustainability best practices, tools, or technologies <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 7.3:</b> Number of producers that adopted environmental best practices or tools <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 7.4:</b> Number of new tools/technologies developed or enhanced to improve sustainability/ conservation or other environmental outcomes <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 7.5:</b> Number of additional acres managed with sustainable practices, tools, or technologies that focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7.5a Water quality/conservation <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>7.5b Soil health <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>7.5c Biodiversity <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>7.5d Reduction in energy use <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> <li>7.5e Other positive environmental outcomes (optional) <a href="#">Enter number</a>.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indicator 7.6:</b> Number of additional acres established and maintained for the mutual benefit of pollinators/specialty crops <a href="#">Enter number</a> .
<b>Description of data collection methods:</b> <a href="#">Enter a description of the data collection methods that will be used to demonstrate progress toward achieving the selected Indicator(s).</a>

**7. Budget Summary and 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. For each paid project

participant, indicate title, percent of full time equivalents (FTE) to be spent on the project 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 property having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost of \$10,000 or more. If the per-unit cost is under \$10,000, then include these items under supplies. Only equipment rental or leasing 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 a per-unit acquisition cost under \$10,000. This includes anything from office supplies and software to educational or field supplies. Be specific, list all items you intend to purchase; the per-unit cost, the number of units purchased, when you expect to acquire it and the total funds requested. For non-typical materials and supply items, include a brief narrative of how the items fit with the project.
- **Travel** – Mileage reimbursement following federal requirements for reimbursement rates, vehicle rental, or airfare are allowed.
  - i. Travel costs for individuals not employed by the applicant organization must be listed under Contractual.
  - ii. Justifications must exist for each trip, including approximate dates of travel, who is attending and, if applicable, why more than one person is needed.
  - iii. 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>.
  - iv. Provide the following information for each trip:
    - 1. Trip destination.
    - 2. Purpose of trip.
    - 3. Type of expense (airfare, car rental, mileage, lodging, etc.).
    - 4. Number of days traveling.
    - 5. Estimated unit of measure (nights, days, mileage).
    - 6. Number of units
    - 7. Cost per unit
    - 8. Number of travelers claiming expense.
    - 9. 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.
  - i. 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 at <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.

- ii. 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:
  - i. Conferences/Meeting - Costs of holding a conference or meeting are included in this category. Only conferences with direct impact on specialty crop producers, processors or intended grant beneficiaries are allowed.
  - ii. 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 percentage of use is not acceptable.
  - iii. 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.
  - iv. Publication Costs - Provide the estimated cost of preparing and printing of brochures and other program and outreach materials.
  - v. 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** – Matching funds are not required.
- 8. Letters of Support** - 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 they are from organizations such as state grower groups who may have to get board approval to submit a letter. 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.
- 9. 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 (5 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 10:00 a.m. on June 09, 2025. 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: [datcpdadgrants@wisconsin.gov](mailto:datcpdadgrants@wisconsin.gov).

For questions, contact the above email.

*Email -* [datcpdadgrants@wisconsin.gov](mailto:datcpdadgrants@wisconsin.gov)  
*Phone -* (608) 590-7239  
*Address -* DATCP Division of Agricultural Development  
2811 Agriculture Dr.  
Madison, WI 53718

## E. Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Application Checklist

Each submission must use the application forms provided on the Wisconsin Specialty Crop Block Grants website (<https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/AgDevelopment/SpecialtyCropBlockGrants.aspx>), which includes:

- A. Application with Cover Sheet Project Profile that details:
  - Project Description
  - Project Purpose
  - Project Beneficiaries
  - Project Continuation Information
  - Other Project Funding
  - External Project Support
  - Expected Measurable Outcomes
  - Budget Summary and Narrative
- B. 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 as well as representatives from industry, universities, public agencies, and 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. Applications are also evaluated based on the criteria listed in [Wis. Admin. Code § ATPC 163.03\(2\)](#).

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 July 2025 for approval.



## B. Notification of Award

Upon approval of the Wisconsin State Plan by USDA-AMS, applicants will be notified 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 Late 2025.

## C. Grant Award Agreement and Payment

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. WI DATCP will not reimburse project expenses incurred outside of the Agreement's performance period. The Agreement must be signed before WI DATCP will reimburse expenses.

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 outline expenditures on the Request for Reimbursement Form and provide supporting documentation, such as receipts and paid invoices. Twenty-five 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 is required within 60 days of 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 (10 percent 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.

## IV. 2025 Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
<b>1. Grant Application</b>	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the project well organized, thought out, and explained in a way that makes sense and sounds like it can be carried out successfully?</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Project Purpose</b>	25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well does the applicant define the need for and purpose of the project?</li> <li>Are the project objectives clear and appropriate?</li> <li>Is the project important and timely?</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Potential Impact and Industry Support</b>	25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the project have a positive impact on the targeted specialty crop industry? Will it be effective at enhancing the competitiveness of that industry?</li> <li>Does the number benefiting justify the investment?</li> <li>Is it apparent that the project is important to and supported by the impacted specialty crop industry?</li> <li>Will industry be actively involved in the project?</li> </ul>	
<b>4. Expected Measurable Outcomes</b>	30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did the applicant select one of the specific required outcomes and associated indicators provided in the RFP?</li> <li>Did the applicant explain how the project will accomplish the outcome measure(s) and indicator(s)?</li> <li>Does the project seem likely to achieve the outcome measures?</li> <li>Are the chosen outcome(s) relevant to the program priorities and connected to the overall proposal?</li> <li>Does the applicant adequately explain how required data will be collected in regards to their chosen outcome and indicator?</li> </ul>	
<b>5. Budget and Narrative</b>	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the amount requested reasonable? Are line items reasonable and appropriate?</li> <li>Does the budget narrative adequately explain the line items?</li> </ul>	