

Delaware receives funds to increase locally grown specialty crops

DOVER, Del. – The Delaware Department of Agriculture announced today that they are seeking applications for this year's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, with nearly \$359,000 allocated to assist in increasing the competitiveness of Delaware-grown specialty crops. Applications will be accepted through April 22, 2019.

The program, funded through the federal Farm Bill, covers products known as specialty crops, including fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture. Projects should benefit the specialty crop industry as a whole and be able to provide a positive impact with measurable outcomes. Grants are available between \$5,000 and \$50,000 for projects that may last between one and three years in length.

Applications should be submitted by agricultural producers, nonprofit organizations, government entities, for-profit companies or educational institutions based in Delaware or with a business or educational affiliation here. Funding cannot be used for field crops, such as corn and soybeans, or animal agriculture.

An informational grant workshop will be held on April 3 at 5 p.m. in the Delaware Department of Agriculture's Conference Center at 2320 South DuPont Highway, Dover.

Past Delaware projects have included research on improving commercial broccoli production, efforts to expand a community-supported agriculture program, research on growing persimmons, and marketing to promote locally grown specialty crops.

Applications are available at <https://de.gov/scbg>, or from DDA marketing specialist JoAnn Walston at 302-698-4592 or joann.walston@delaware.gov. Due to a change in the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant cycle, applications are due earlier this year. Applications must be received by 4:30 p.m. on April 22.

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