

# USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program for Connecticut

## PHASE TWO: *Application Training Workshop*



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# CONGRATULATIONS!

You made it through Phase One.

**Now, onto Phase Two.....**

- Deadlines.
- Project Narrative breakdown.
- Application review process.
- Overview of reporting requirements and payment process.

**Grant goal is to have a**

**project that solely enhances the competitiveness of specialty crops in domestic and foreign markets.**

**while...**

**impacting and producing measurable outcomes for the specialty crop industry.**

# Deadlines

- ▶ ~~March 4~~ ~~Announcement of RFA/Concept Proposal submission~~
- ▶ ~~April 15~~ ~~Concept Proposals due~~
- ▶ April 22 Full application requests announced
- ▶ May 1 Mandatory training workshop for applicants
- ▶ **May 21 Full applications are due via email by 4:00pm**
- ▶ June 16 Review Panel Meeting
- ▶ June 19 Announcement of awards
- ▶ July 9 CT DoAg submits compiled application to USDA
- ▶ Oct. 1 Expected date of federal award announcement
- ▶ January 1, 2015 Release of funds to sub-grantees (aprox)

# Application Submission

- ▶ All applications **MUST** be submitted via **email**
- ▶ Microsoft Word format
- ▶ 12pt, Arial font
- ▶ 1 inch margins
- ▶ Single spaced
- ▶ Project Narrative does not exceed five (5) pages
- ▶ Complete Applications must include:
  - Cover Page
  - Project Narrative (max 5 pgs)
  - Budget Form
  - Letters of Support

All applications must be submitted via email to Jaime Smith, [jaimе.smith@ct.gov](mailto:jaimе.smith@ct.gov) by close of business (4:00pm) on **May 21, 2014**.

*Late applications will not be considered.*

# Project Narrative

## Consists of:

- ▶ Title
- ▶ Abstract
- ▶ Organization
- ▶ Project Purpose
- ▶ Project Impact
- ▶ Expected Measureable Outcomes
- ▶ Work Plan
- ▶ Project Commitment
- ▶ Budget

**If any section is missing it is an incomplete application and will not be considered for funding by the review panel.**

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Project Title

- Include the title of the project **in 15 words or less**

## Abstract

- A summary (abstract) of 200 words or less.
- **It should include the need for the project, a brief description of the goals and outcomes, and the plan for evaluating and measuring success of the project.**

## Partner Organization

- ▶ Organization's name
- ▶ Project contact name with email and phone

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Project Purpose

- Identify the **specific issue/problem/interest/need** to be addressed
- **Why** the project is important and timely
- **Clearly describe the methods implemented** to ensure that funding is being used to *solely* benefit eligible specialty crops.
  - **Match for non-specialty crops: Clearly explain (1) what those funds are specifically covering, (2) where the match is coming from, and (3) how the match amount was determined**

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Project Purpose (cont.):

- **If previously funded by the SCBGP: describe how the project differs from and is building on the previous project's efforts.**
  - Also describe the likelihood of the project becoming self-sustaining.
  - Include (3-5 sentences) of the accomplishments of the project when previously funded by the SCBGP that led to soliciting additional funds.
- Indicate if the project will be or has been submitted to or funded by another Federal or State grant.
  - **If it has/will be: identify the grant program and describe how the projects differs from and supplements efforts of the SCBGP.**
  - If it hasn't/will not: the following statement needs to conclude this section: *"This project has not been submitted to or funded by another federal, state or private entity grant program."*

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Project Impact.

Discuss the number of people or operations affected. Be specific regarding:

- ▶ The intended beneficiaries of each project.
- ▶ The potential economic impact of the project on the intended beneficiaries if such data is available and relevant to the project.
- ▶ **If a multistate project: how will the project have a multistate/national impact.**

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Expected Measurable Outcomes (EMO's).

- ▶ Describe *at least one* distinct, quantifiable measurable outcome that directly and meaningfully supports the projects purpose.
- ▶ True, actual, achievable numbers.
- ▶ The outcome-oriented objective must define an event or condition that is *external* to the project and that is of direct importance to the intended beneficiaries and/or the public. IE: A change in knowledge, oriented behavior, or conditions

### EMO'S CONSIST OF 6 PARTS

Goals

Performance Measures

**Benchmarks**

Targets

**Monitoring Plan**

**Dissemination Plan**

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Expected Measurable Outcomes cont.

### ➤ *Goals*

- based on a need
- are specific and
- outcome-oriented.
- the 'whys' of the project

### ➤ *Performance Measure*

- Measures/indicators used to observe progress and measure actual results.
- Define who/what your data sources are and how the data will be collected.

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Expected Measurable Outcomes cont.

### **Benchmark:**

- Allows you assess the relative performance of each goal.
- Determine the benchmark you're measuring against
- If data does not exist, describe the lack of data.
- Use the Benchmarks to set Targets for the quantity of change expected.

### *Targets*

- Absolute level of achievement (ex: feed 150 homeless people); ii.)
- Change in level of achievement (ex: feed 150 homeless people, 35 more than last year); or iii.)
- Change in relation to the scale of the problem (ex: feed 150 homeless people, approximately 10% of the city's homeless population.)

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Expected Measurable Outcomes cont.

### *Monitoring Plan to Reach the Targets*

- How will progress be monitored?
- What will be done to ensure the targets you're working towards are actually being achieved - how will the data be collected and how often?
- How data gathered will be used to correct deficiencies and improve performance, both as it gathered and analyzed and in subsequent project periods.
- If the outcome measures are long-term and occur after the project's completion, identify an intermediate outcome that occurs before the end of the grant period and that is expected to lead to fulfillment of long term outcomes of the projects. This can be included in your monitoring plan section.

### *Information Dissemination*

- Describe how the results of the project will be shared with specialty crop grower.
- What, if any, grower groups will you be working with?

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Expected Measurable Outcomes cont.

### EMO chart to include in Project Narrative

<b>GOAL:</b>	
<b>PERFORMANCE MEASURE:</b>	
<b>BENCHMARK:</b>	
<b>TARGET:</b>	
<b>MONITORING PLAN TO REACH THE TARGETS</b>	
<b>INFORMATION DESSEMINATION</b>	

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Work Plan.

Identify the steps (actual activities) you'll take to accomplish your goals

- ▶ Indicate what the activity is (including any travel)
- ▶ Who will do the work of each activity (including sub-recipients/contractors)
- ▶ When it will be done, including month and year, within the allowable grant period.
- ▶ Indicate the budget required for each activity

# Project Narrative Breakdown

Work Plan cont.

Work Plan chart to include in Project Narrative

Project Activity	Who	Timeline	Budget

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Project Commitment.

- Describe how **all grant partners commit to and work towards** the goals and outcome measures of the proposed project.
- Describe how the specialty crop **stakeholders** (other than the applicant, individuals, and organizations involved in the project) support the project and why.
- Each project partner involved must submit a letter of support outlining what their responsibilities are and how they will work with the applicant to accomplish the goals.

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Budget Narrative

Provide descriptive text explaining how and why the budget is needed and justified to accomplish the Expected Measureable Outcomes.

Provide **sufficient detail** about **each** budget category below.

### *Personnel.*

For each project participant, indicate their:

- title
- the percent of full time equivalent (FTE) on the project

### *Fringe Benefits.*

Indicate the rate and amount of fringe benefits for each salary listed above.

# Project Narrative Breakdown

**Budget cont.**

**Travel.** The form must be included with all columns filled in:

Trip Destination	Purpose of Trip	Type of Expense (airfare, car, rental, hotel, meals, mileage, etc.)	Unit of Measure (days, nights, mile)	Number of Units	Cost/Unit	Number of Travelers Claiming Expense	Total Funds Requested for Destination

Must follow organizational travel policy. If no policy must follow travel regulation standards: [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Budget cont.

### *Equipment.*

Equipment is defined as an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and a per item acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more.

- ▶ Indicate anticipated purchases or rental costs of equipment and its intended use.
- ▶ List separately each item of equipment, its intended use, and its cost.
- ▶ Special purpose equipment (used for research, scientific, medical or technical) must solely enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops and benefit the specialty crop industry.
- ▶ Note: Prior approval from CT DoAG/AMS means that the special purpose equipment must be included in the Project Plan, and the Project Plan must receive approval from CT DoAG/AMS.
- ▶ Rental costs of buildings and equipment are allowable as direct costs in accordance with the cost principles in Subpart T of 7 CFR 3015.

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Budget cont.

### *Supplies.*

- ▶ Items \$4999 and under should be identified here.
- ▶ The chart needs to be completed in its entirety.

Item Destination	Justification for Supplies	Cost/Unit	Number of Units Purchased	Total Funds Requested for Supplies

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Budget cont.

### *Consulting/Contractual.*

Purchasing goods and/or procuring services performed by an individual or organization other than the applicant in the form of a procurement relationship.

- ▶ Provide a short description of the services *each* contract will cover and the flat rate fee or the total hourly rate.
- ▶ Compensation for individual consultant services should be reasonable and consistent with that paid for similar services in the marketplace.
- ▶ Consultant may not exceed **\$157,100 or \$75.28 per hour**. This does not include fringe, travel, indirect, or other costs.

### *Other.*

Provide detailed descriptions of other costs, including cost/unit.

- ▶ conferences or meetings,
- ▶ communications,
- ▶ speaker/trainer fees,
- ▶ publication costs,
- ▶ data collection, and
- ▶ other budgeted costs associated with each project.

# Project Narrative Breakdown

**Budget cont.**

***Indirect.***

- ▶ **0% can be taken.**

*Income.*

- ▶ Gross income earned under a grant which is directly generated by the grant-supported activity earned only because of the grant agreement during the period of performance.
- ▶ This includes (but not limited to) income from fees for services performed, sale of commodities or items fabricated under an award (even if the item is sold at costs,) registration fees, etc. .
- ▶ And explanation of how income will be reinvested into the project to solely benefit specialty crops must be provided.

# Project Narrative Breakdown

## Cash Match.

- ▶ While no cash match is required, applicants contributing a cash match to the project shall be given additional consideration. This is applicable to cash matches only.
- ▶ Please clearly outline the applicant's cash contribution and what it is responsible for in the overall project.
- ▶ **Adequate records must be kept.**

## Unallowable expenses.

- ▶ political/lobbying activities
- ▶ capital expenditures for buildings (building, fixing, or purchasing) and land (purchasing)
- ▶ general purpose equipment
- ▶ motor vehicles
- ▶ benefit an individual farm, business, or commercial product
- ▶ **Tuition/tuition reimbursement**

# Review Panel Evaluation

The Review Panel must select projects:

1. Solely enhanced the competitiveness of specialty crops.
  2. Benefit all specialty crop producers in CT/for that industry.
  3. Are well rounded, complete projects that efficiently used staff time and federal funds.
  4. Are feasible projects that show a reasonable timeline and strategy for implementation.
  5. Projects are significant to the industry and will make an important and/or original contribution to the field of endeavor.
- ▶ Review Panel is made up of both industry and specialty crop producers
  - ▶ Have not submitted projects for consideration.

# Once Awarded...

Once notified by the USDA (after Oct 1<sup>st</sup>) sub-grantees will be required to complete the following documents:

- ▶ Contract or Memorandum of Understanding
- ▶ Form W-9
- ▶ Vendor Form
- ▶ Provide quarterly invoices

# Reporting Requirements & Payment Process

## 6 Month Status Reports

*Compensation Activity Reports (“CAR”)*: Employees who work on multiple activities or cost objectives must support their salaries actual distribution of activities, account for the total activity for which the employee is compensated. CARs must be prepared at least monthly and coincide with one or more pay periods.

**Annual Performance Reports:** An Annual Report is required to CT DOAG 30 days after the end of the first year or the date of the signed grant agreement and each subsequent year until the expiration date of the grant period.

**Final Performance Report:** A final performance report will be required within 30 days following the end date of the grant agreement. The final report will be posted on the SCBGP-FB website.

# Reporting Requirements & Payment Process

## Payments

- ▶ Awardees will receive a portion of their total award up front
- ▶ Additional funds will be provided on a quarterly basis based upon the need identified in the work plan
- ▶ Invoices are due the first day of the quarter
- ▶ One payment will be held until all status reports, annual, and final reports are received.

# Last Thought...

Write like you are writing for someone who knows nothing about your project.

Just a reminder to always be working toward the grant's goal:

**Project that solely enhances the competitiveness of specialty crops in domestic and foreign markets.**

All applications must be submitted via email to Jaime Smith, [jaime.smith@ct.gov](mailto:jaime.smith@ct.gov)

by

**Wednesday, May 21<sup>st</sup>**

**at 4:00pm**