

**New Jersey Department of Agriculture: Amount of Funds Awarded: \$870,479.24; Number of Sub-awards: 21\***

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture will enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops through leveraging efforts to market and promote specialty crops; assisting producers with research and development relevant to specialty crops; expanding availability and access to specialty crops; and addressing local, regional, and national challenges confronting specialty crop producers through a variety of activities/projects with their grant recipients. The State’s sub-awards include 9 research projects, 3 education and outreach projects, 4 marketing projects and 4 projects that cross more than one focus area to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops including peaches, blueberries, cranberries, currants and spearmint throughout the State of New Jersey.

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Project Budget</b>
1. “Know Farms, Know Food:” Expanding Consumer Awareness, Knowledge, and Demand of New Jersey’s Specialty Crops	The Foodshed Alliance’s project, “Know Farms, Know Food:” Expanding Consumer Awareness, Knowledge, and Demand of New Jersey’s Specialty Crops, will promote a consumer-focused campaign providing significant exposure to New Jersey’s specialty crop farmers.	\$39,998.00
2. Promoting Consumer Knowledge and Consumption of Specialty Crops Through the "Flavor Workshop"	The Franklin Food Bank will continue to increase child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops through the delivery of a nutrition program that will provide hands-on training and materials.	\$22,307.20
3. Strengthening Food Security and Local Agriculture through Specialty Crop Partnerships	Loving Our Cities, Inc., a nonprofit based in Sewell, NJ, will lead this initiative to increase food access and strengthen South Jersey’s local agricultural economy.	\$27,000.00
4. Pest and Disease Control on NJ Specialty Crop Farms Through Shared Soil Steaming Equipment Model	Three Central NJ farms (Moonshot Farm, Abe’s Acres, and Ramblin’ Sol Farm) will reduce soil pathogens in high tunnels by utilizing a soil steamer and creating a shared equipment model with peer-to-peer education to enable other farms in the region to use the soil steamer.	\$40,000.00
5. Promoting Nutrition and Consumption of New Jersey Blueberries to Local Consumers	The New Jersey Blueberry Growers Association will work with local advertising agencies to deliver an extensive radio and aerial banner campaign throughout the tri-state area.	\$40,000.00
6. Documenting Consumer Preferences for New Jersey Peaches and Digital Promotional Program	The New Jersey Peach Promotion Council's (NJPPC) overarching objective is to increase the consumption of New Jersey peaches. This application will fund a university research project to determine consumer preferences for New Jersey peaches.	\$40,000.00

\* This number includes a sub-award for grant administration.

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7. Utilizing Technology to Increase Consumption and Knowledge of Specialty Crops in NJ: Replication of the New Root's Fresh Stop Market Model and Mobi	New Roots will organize farmers and communities in New Jersey to build logistics and infrastructure that increase farm income and improve access to fresh food in NJEDA food desert communities.	\$40,000.00
8. Creating a Statewide Toolkit for Increasing SNAP and FMNP Sales by Piloting in Asbury Park/Neptune, Toms River, and Bridgeton	New Jersey Democracy Collaborative (NJFDC) will lead a project to develop targeted, community-informed marketing and outreach campaigns that promote SNAP and FMNP redemption at NJ specialty crop farms.	\$38,390.00
9. Project to Maximize the Effectiveness of the Jersey Fresh Advertising Program in 2026 and Beyond	The NJDA seeks SCBG funding to increase awareness and purchases of locally grown crops intended to increase NJ farmers' sales utilizing a marketing campaign with various tactics to promote the Jersey Fresh brand and maximize reach of our target audience.	\$134,607.82
10. Garden State Special: An Educational Video Series Highlighting NJ Specialty Crops, Producers that Grow Them, and the Communities that Enjoy Them	The Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey (NOFA NJ) will produce a series of educational and promotional videos to highlight NJ specialty crop producers and to promote increased consumption of locally-grown specialty crops.	\$36,513.57
11. Mapping Blueberry Flowering and Pollination using AI and Autonomous Drones for Assessing Duke Decline and Breeding of New Cultivars	Rowan University in collaboration with Rutgers Philip E. Marucci Center for Blueberry and Cranberry Research will develop AI tools to map flowering and pollination of blueberry bushes.	\$39,109.00
12. Development of an Affordable Smart Weed Detection and Management System for Row Crops	Rowan University in collaboration with Rutgers Philip E. Marucci Center for Blueberry and Cranberry Research will develop an affordable smart weed detection and management system for row crops that can be mounted on vehicles or autonomous ground robots.	\$39,941.00
13. Multidisciplinary Approach for Optimizing Pesticide Application Rate for Blueberry	The PE Marucci Center for Blueberry and Cranberry Research and Extension at Rutgers University will lead a research project that addresses the critical need to optimize pesticide application rates for New Jersey commercial growers.	\$39,925.00

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14. Beyond the Berry: Exploring Leaf Flavonoids for Dual-Purpose and Early Selection of Resilient and Health-Promoting Cranberry Cultivars	The blueberry and cranberry breeding program at Rutgers University seeks to boost New Jersey's cranberry industry competitiveness through speeding up flavonoid-rich cranberry cultivar development for health-promoting foods.	\$40,000.00
15. Evaluation of Niche Berry Crops for New Jersey Growers	Rutgers University will evaluate the horticultural viability of several berry species new to most New Jersey growers. This project will establish a test plot/demonstration trial of niche berry crops with potential market value.	\$13,000.00
16. Optimizing Application Rates: Multidisciplinary Approaches for Pesticide Testing	Rutgers P.E. Marucci Center for Blueberry and Cranberry Research and Extension and this project, will utilize a state-of-the-art spray bench to explore the relationship between rate, concentration, and pesticide efficacy.	\$40,000.00
17. Evaluating the Efficacy of Phenolic Compounds and Rhizobacteria for Mitigating Phytophthora Capsici Infection in Pumpkin	Rutgers Cooperative Extension will explore the use of phenolic compounds and rhizobacteria to mitigate the effects of Phytophthora capsici disease for small scale pumpkin growers.	\$39,690.00
18. Improvement of Roselle (Hibiscus Sabdariffa) as a Dual-Use Crop Suitable for New Jersey Specialty Crop Farmers	Rutgers University will improve and release new roselle (Hibiscus sabdariffa) varieties to be used as dual-use crops, for production and consumption of flavorful nutrient-rich leafy greens and dark pigmented calyces.	\$39,998.65
19. Development of Powdery Mildew Resistant Spearmints with High Flavor profile for the New Jersey Fresh Market	Rutgers University will develop new spearmints resistant to powdery mildew (PM) for the NJ fresh market industry while maintaining essential oil quality, yield, and agronomic traits following their evaluation by NJ growers.	\$39,999.00
20. Expanding Specialty Crops Access with Local Health Centers Through our New Farm to City Center	Urban Agriculture Cooperative (UAC) is transforming Newark's food system by connecting local producers with local communities.	\$40,000.00
Grant Administration	Ensure that the State Agency and sub-awardees abide by Federal and State requirements and regulations by performing pre-award and post-award activities to administer Specialty Crop Block Grant Program funding.	\$40,000.00