



## State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
HEALTH / AGRICULTURE BUILDING  
PO BOX 330  
TRENTON NJ 08625-0330

PHILIP D. MURPHY  
*Governor*  
SHEILA Y. OLIVER  
*Lt. Governor*

DOUGLAS H. FISHER  
*Secretary*

February 25, 2020

Dear Grower Representative:

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture is pleased to tentatively announce that approximately \$300,000.00 of Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) funds are expected to be available next year from the United States Department of Agriculture to directly support New Jersey's specialty crop industry organizations beginning in late 2020. Although the official budget allocation has not been made by the USDA they are encouraging State Departments of Agriculture to begin soliciting project proposals. In the interim all Specialty Crop Block Grant Program applications are to be considered tentative pending the publication of the federal approval of the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) in the federal registry for the USDA's Specialty Crop Block Grant program. The New Jersey Department of Agriculture is requesting that interested organizations representing New Jersey's specialty crop industry submit these tentative project proposals for consideration for this funding.

Commodity promotion councils, grower marketing cooperatives, county boards of agriculture, researchers and other agricultural organizations are being encouraged to provide this producer input to assist the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) in the development of the FY2020 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program in New Jersey.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Individual producers or solitary businesses are not eligible to apply. Applicants must be a legal entity representing many growers and have the legal capacity to enter into a contract. Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide a cash match for their projects.

For this grant program "specialty crops" are defined as: vegetables, fruits including grapes for wine, nuts, horticultural products including Christmas trees, honey, herbs, potatoes, sweet corn and other specialty crops. Agricultural commodities which are NOT eligible for these grant funds include, but are not limited to: feed crops, food grains, livestock, dairy and poultry products including eggs, range grasses and oilseed crops.

**The deadline for 2020 SCBG project applications to the New Jersey Department of Agriculture is March 31, 2020.**

To be eligible for a grant, projects must "enhance the competitiveness" of specialty crops and might include, but are not limited to: research, promotion, marketing, nutrition, trade enhancement, food

safety, food security, plant health programs, education, “buy local” programs, increased consumption, increased innovation, improved efficiency and reduced costs of distribution systems, environmental concerns and conservation, product development, and developing cooperatives.

Examples of past SCBG projects have included advertising and promotion, integrated pest management, various forms of production research and education and outreach. All proposed projects will be required to follow a standardized format and comply with the enclosed USDA guidelines.

Please see the enclosed tentative application information. This application will also be posted on the NJDA website on the homepage under Grants and Financial Services. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at 609 292-5536 or [Joe.Atchison@ag.nj.gov](mailto:Joe.Atchison@ag.nj.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Atchison, III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending to the right and a small mark at the end.

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