

West Virginia Department of Agriculture

Walt Helmick, Commissioner



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APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE FOR 2016 WEST VIRGINIA SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANTS

Charleston, W.Va. – The West Virginia Department of Agriculture is now accepting project proposals for the 2016 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP). The deadline to apply is March 28, 2016.

The grant program, funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered by the WVDA, gives specialty crop growers the opportunity to learn new techniques, test them out, and share that knowledge with other producers.

The goal, according to West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture Walt Helmick, is to expand specialty crops here in the Mountain State. "Our farmers are doing fabulous work rebuilding the state's agriculture industry. However, sometimes they need help to grow ideas and help them blossom. Specialty Crop Block Grants make it financially possible for those projects to take shape."

Those applying for a grant must deal with a specialty crop such as fruits, vegetables, horticulture products, tree nuts, herbs and spices, maple syrup, honey, and Christmas trees, among others. Products explicitly excluded are livestock, eggs, corn, soybeans, and other commodity-type crops.

All projects must focus on industry related research, education, improved production, or marketing of specialty crops. The program is available to groups and organizations that qualify to receive grant funding but cannot be used to fund individual farms or enterprises.

For more information on the program, log on to:

<http://www.agriculture.wv.gov/division/marketinganddevelopment/Pages/Grant-and-Training-Opportunities.aspx>.

You can also contact Cindy Martel, marketing specialist, at cmartel@wvda.us.

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