



California Department of Food and Agriculture
Office of Grants Administration

2017 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Solicitation Process





Most Important Rule...

- Follow the Directions!





2017 Request for Concept Proposals

- About the Program
- Other Grant Programs
- Solicitation Process and Timeline
- How to Apply
- Funding Areas, Funding Categories, and Program Priorities
- Fixed Amount Awards
- Concept Proposal Questions and Scoring
- Concept Proposal Budget
- Requirements and Limitations
- Review and Notification
- Assistance and Questions
- APPENDIX A: Project Examples
- APPENDIX B: Budget Template Example
- APPENDIX C: Frequently Asked Questions

*Technical Requirements
are not Suggestions!*



About the Program

- “The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) is pleased to announce a competitive solicitation process to award 2017 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) funds for projects *solely* enhancing the competitiveness of California specialty crops.”

Funds cannot benefit a single organization, institution, or individual



Crucial Point...

- **Emphasize the Public Benefit!**

"This grant would allow our organization to expand our training program and become the leading provider of training for socially disadvantaged farmers in Stanislaus County."

vs.

"This grant would enable our organization to triple the number of socially disadvantaged farmers served by our training program, thus countering the current deficit of professionally trained specialty crop growers in Stanislaus County."



What are Specialty Crops?

- Fruits, including dried fruits, vegetables, and tree nuts
- Culinary and medicinal herbs and spices
- Nursery, floriculture, and horticulture crops

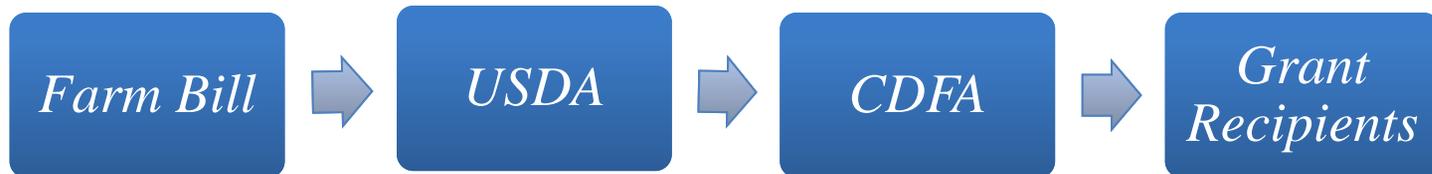
For a list of eligible specialty crops, visit:

www.ams.usda.gov/scbgp



Funding and Duration

- Specialty Crop Block Grant funding is authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill.



- Project Grant Amounts:
\$50,000 - \$450,000
- Project Duration:
November 1, 2017 – April 30, 2020

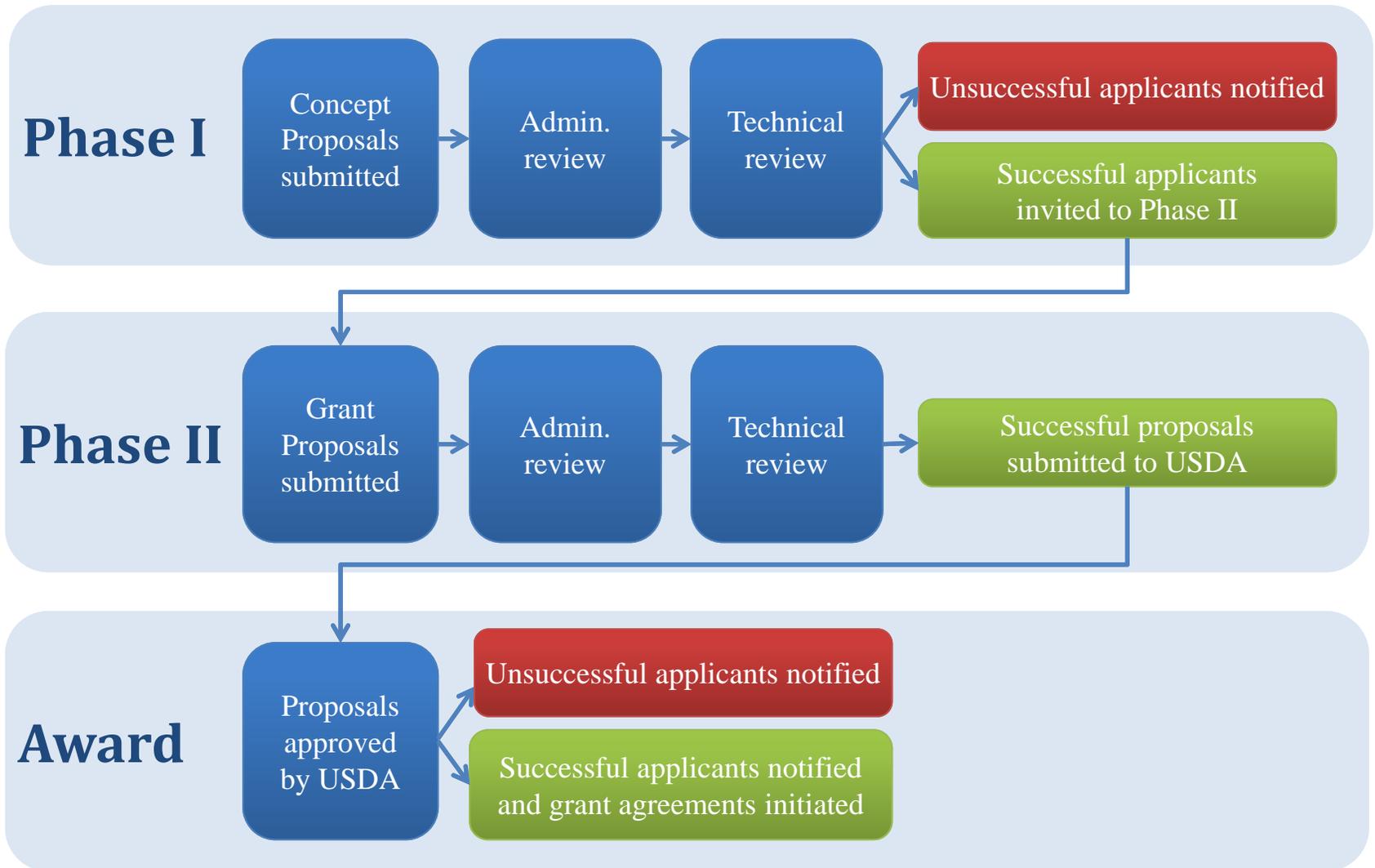


Eligibility

- The following organizations are eligible to apply:
 - Non-profit and for-profit organizations
 - Local, state, federal, and tribal governments
 - Public and private colleges and universities
- Individuals are not eligible to apply



Solicitation Process





Two Levels of Review

- Administrative
 - Internal: Conducted by CDFA
- Technical
 - External: Conducted by Technical Review Committee

To volunteer as a Technical Reviewer, visit:
<http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/grants>



Solicitation Timeline

Phase I: Concept Proposal	
Release Request for Concept Proposals	October 5, 2016
Workshops and Webinars	October 17–28, 2016
Concept Proposals Due	November 15, 2016, 5:00 pm PST
Phase II: Grant Proposal <i>(by invitation only)</i>	
Invitation to Submit Grant Proposals	January 2017
Grant Proposals Due	February 28, 2017, 5:00 pm PST
Grant Proposals to USDA for Approval	June 2017
Award	
Announce and Award Funding	September 2017



Funding Areas and Categories

- **Funding Area I: Market Enhancement**
 - Market Enhancement Category A: California Grown Promotion
 - Market Enhancement Category B: Market Expansion and Access
- **Funding Area II: Training and Education**
 - Training and Education Category A: Specialty Crop Nutrition Education
 - Training and Education Category B: Equipping Current and Next Generation Specialty Crop Farmers
- **Funding Area III: Research**
 - Research Category A: Environmental Stewardship and Conservation
 - Research Category B: Plant Health and Pest Management
 - Research Category C: Food Safety (*Separate proposal solicitation*)
- **Fixed Amount Award: Technical Assistance for Workforce Issues**



I. Market Enhancement:

A. California Grown Promotion

- Projects that enhance the marketability and long-term competitiveness of specialty crops by leveraging the California Grown identity.
- **Program Priorities:**
 - Expanding opportunities for specialty crop producers, marketing orders, and other specialty crop stakeholders through innovative marketing and promotional activities that incorporate multiple specialty crop products leveraging the California Grown identity.
 - Creating economic opportunities for specialty crop producers through specialty crop market development activities that focus on local, regional, and international markets by leveraging the California Grown identity.
 - Emphasizing the quality, food safety, and healthy lifestyle benefits of specialty crops leveraging the California Grown identity.
 - Developing environmental stewardship educational initiatives that expand the consumer marketability of California specialty crops leveraging the California Grown identity.
 - Promoting California Grown specialty crops by highlighting the diverse stories of California's specialty crop farmers and/or California's rich agricultural history.



I. Market Enhancement:

B. Market Expansion and Access

- Projects that increase the competitiveness of California specialty crops by expanding the specialty crop consumer market or improving the availability of specialty crops to California consumers.
- **Program Priorities**
 - Increasing the availability of specialty crops in homes, schools, the work place, hospitals, prisons, and underserved communities.
 - Increasing capacity for small-scale specialty crop production and distribution into urban communities.
 - Increasing the awareness of and demand for sustainable, locally sourced specialty crops.



II. Training and Education:

A. Specialty Crop Nutrition Education

- Projects that improve the public's knowledge and understanding of specialty crop agriculture and its beneficial importance to the health and well-being of all Californians.
- **Program Priorities:**
 - Improving awareness among adults and seniors of the health benefits of California specialty crops.
 - Education to promote increased specialty crop consumption among children to develop lifelong healthy habits.
 - Increasing consumption of California specialty crops through education that furthers integration of specialty crops into a healthy diet.
 - Increasing knowledge of how to produce, prepare, or preserve specialty crops.



II. Training and Education:

B. Equipping Current and Next Generation Specialty Crop Farmers

- Projects that benefit current and future specialty crop farmers through education and training.
- **Program Priorities**
 - Training and equipping the next generation of young, beginning, and urban farmers in agronomic, economic, and environmental stewardship skills.
 - Introducing and recruiting young people to the variety of specialty crop career opportunities.
 - Provide support to specialty crop producers in adopting the requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act.
 - Provide training to support specialty crop producers in environmentally responsible farming methods.



III. Research:

A. Environmental Stewardship and Conservation

- Projects that enhance soil health, conservation of agricultural land and water, and address specialty crop agriculture's contribution to adaptation and/or mitigation of climate change.
- **Program Priorities**
 - Develop strategies and tools to enable specialty crop growers to adapt to climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and sequestering carbon.
 - Develop innovations in water use efficiency and drought resilience.
 - Improve soil health by identifying specific specialty crop management practices that build the soil organic matter content.
 - Research to develop new methods to expand organic and/or sustainable production practices.



III. Research:

B. Plant Health and Pest Management

- Projects that address pests and diseases that affect the production of California's specialty crops.
- **Program Priorities**
 - Developing new tools to detect, eradicate, and control pests and diseases.
 - Preventing and managing pests and diseases to minimize economic and environmental harm to specialty crop growers.
 - Enhancing speed and reliability of detection methods.
 - Utilizing innovative solutions to address threats, including engineering or cultural solutions.



III. Research:

C. Food Safety

- Partnership with the Center for Produce Safety (CPS)
- Separate solicitation

CPS CENTER *for* **PRODUCE SAFETY**

For more information, visit:
www.centerforproducesafety.org



Fixed Amount Awards

Technical Assistance for Workforce Issues

- Projects that address workforce concerns throughout the specialty crop supply chain, including conforming to labor regulations, securing skilled and unskilled workers, and training the existing workforce to effectively utilize new technologies.

*Reviewed by the Equipping Current and Next
Generation Specialty Crop Farmers Technical
Review Committee*



Fixed Amount Awards

- Cannot request funding that exceeds \$150,000
- Cannot have a timeframe that exceeds two years
- Fixed amount awards will be paid in one of two ways:
 - In several partial payments, the amount of each agreed upon in advance, and the “milestone” or event triggering the payment also agreed upon in advance, and set forth in the award; or
 - In one payment upon completion.

For further detail, visit 2017 RFCP



How to Apply

- Partnership with State Water Resources Control Board
- Online application form: FFAST
- User account needed



Financial Assistance Application Submittal Tool (FFAST):
<https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov>



Elements of the Concept Proposal

- Organization Type
- Funding Area and Funding Category
- Program Priorities
- Project Purpose
- Prior Year SCBGP Projects
- Project Sustainability
- Project Beneficiaries
- Outcome Measures
- Project Duration
- Work Plan and Outreach
- Budget



Requirements and Limitations

- 2017 USDA Guidance
- State, local or Indian tribal governments, non-profit organizations, colleges and universities will be subject to 2 CFR 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.
- For-profit organizations will be subject to 48 CFR Subpart 31.2.
- Allowable and Unallowable Costs



Grounds for Disqualification

- Proposals from individual applicants.
- Proposals from applicants with an active exclusion on the federal System for Award Management (SAM).
- Incomplete proposals, including proposals with one or more unanswered questions and/or missing, blank, unreadable, corrupt, or otherwise unusable attachments.
- Proposals that include activities outside the grant duration.
- Proposals for less than the minimum award amount or more than the maximum award amount.
- Proposals with unallowable costs or activities necessary to complete the project objectives, including indirect costs that exceed the limit set forth in this document.



Assistance and Questions

- CDFA will conduct three rounds of Questions and Answers (Q&A) to address general questions.
- Email questions to: grants@cdfa.ca.gov
- Q&A will be posted to the CDFA website: www.cdfa.ca.gov/grants
- To ensure fair competition, CDFA will not answer questions outside of the Q&A process.

*Final deadline to submit questions:
November 7, 2016 by 8:00 am PST*



Resources

CDFA, Office of Grants Administration

Website	www.cdfa.ca.gov/grants
Email	grants@cdfa.ca.gov

Center for Produce Safety

Website	www.centerforproducesafety.org
Telephone	(530) 554-9706

USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service

Website	www.ams.usda.gov/scbgp
---------	--



Questions

