Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

2008 Farm Bill

California Department of Food and Agriculture

cdfa

Purpose:

Solely enhance the competiveness of specialty crops

Fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops (including floriculture).

Funding:

- USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
- $16 - $18 million annually

Eligibility

- *Non-Profit and For-Profit*
- *Local, State, Federal and Tribal Governments*
- *Colleges and Universities*

Funds cannot benefit a single organization, institution, or individual

Project Funding & Duration

- $50,000 - $400,000
- Up to 2 yrs./ 9 mo.

Funding Areas

Research

- Plant Health and Pest Challenges
- Environmental Concerns and Conservation
- Food Safety (CPS)

Marketing

- Agriculture Education/ Outreach
- International Trade
- Market Enhancement and Promotion

Nutrition

- Food Security
- Healthy Eating

Solicitation Process

- Competitive Solicitation Process:
  - Phase I – Concept Proposal
  - Phase II – Grant Proposal

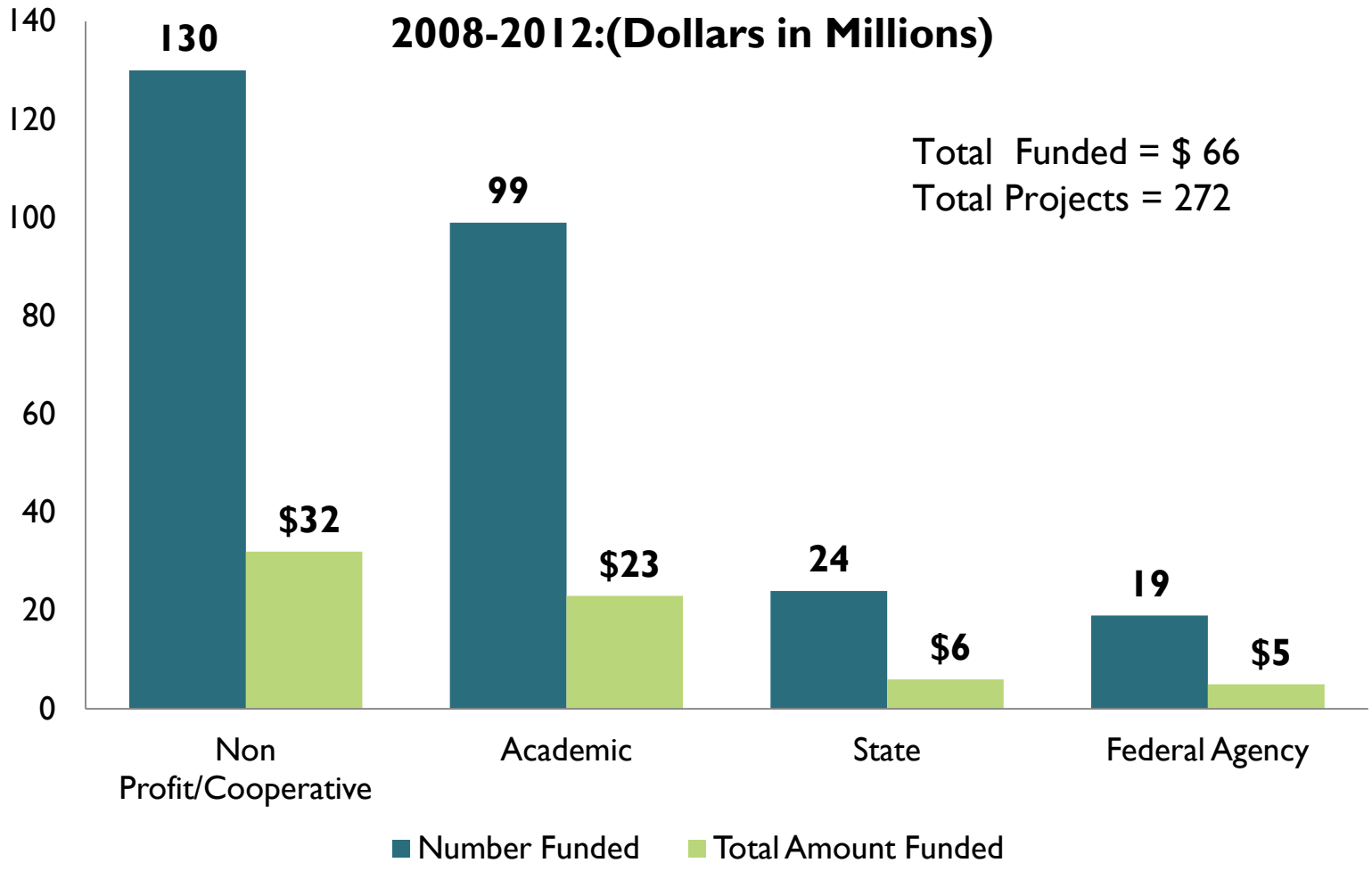
Proposal Solicitation → Review & Recommend → USDA Approval

2008-2012

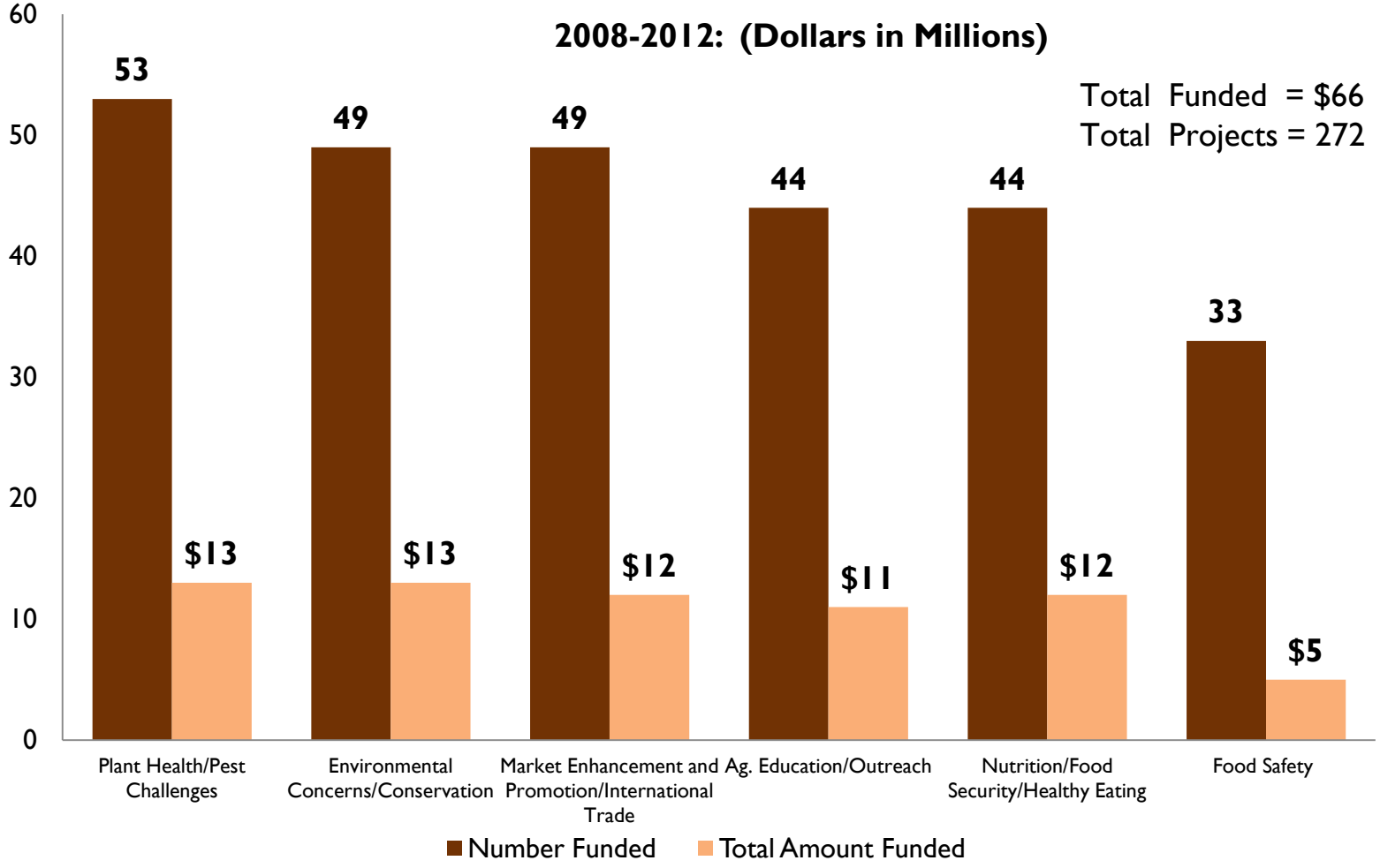
(Dollars in Millions)

Concept Proposals	
Submitted:	1040
Requested:	$274
Grant Proposals	
Submitted:	528
Requested:	$140
Award	
Grants:	272
Funded:	$66

Organization Type



Funding Area



SPECIALTY CROP COMPETITIVENESS GRANTS

PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE: 2012 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Technical Review Committee

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) is pleased to announce the competitive solicitation process to award 2012 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) funds for projects that solely enhance the competitiveness of California Specialty Crops. Specialty crops are defined as fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture).

CDFA expects United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will make up to $17 million available to award grant amounts from $50,000 to $400,000 per project.

If you have additional questions, please contact the Federal Funds Management Office at (916) 657-3231 or grants@cdfa.ca.gov.

GRANT AWARDS & RESOURCES

- SUCCESS STORIES
- FACTS & FIGURES

- **TIMELINE** — 2013 SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM — *Coming Soon...*

ADDITIONAL LINKS

- Ca.Gov Grants Website
- Cooperative State Research, Education & Extension Service Grants (USDA)
- Federal Agriculture Grants (Grants.gov)
- Federal Programs & Grants (American Distance Education Consortium)
- Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE.org)
- Market Access Program (USDA)
- Farmers Market Promotion Program (USDA)
- Contact CDFA Grants Program Staff

CALIFORNIA CLIMATE CHANGE PORTAL

CONTACT US

California Department of Food and Agriculture
Federal Funds Management Office
1220 N Street
Sacramento, California 95814
Phone: (916) 657-3231
Fax: (916) 653-0206
Grants@cdfa.ca.gov

CALIFORNIA AND THE 2012 Farm Bill

Technical Review Process

- Two Levels of Review

1. Administrative - Internal
2. Technical - External

Industry stakeholders and representatives from universities, public agencies, non-profits and for-profits that represent the diversity of California's specialty crop industry.

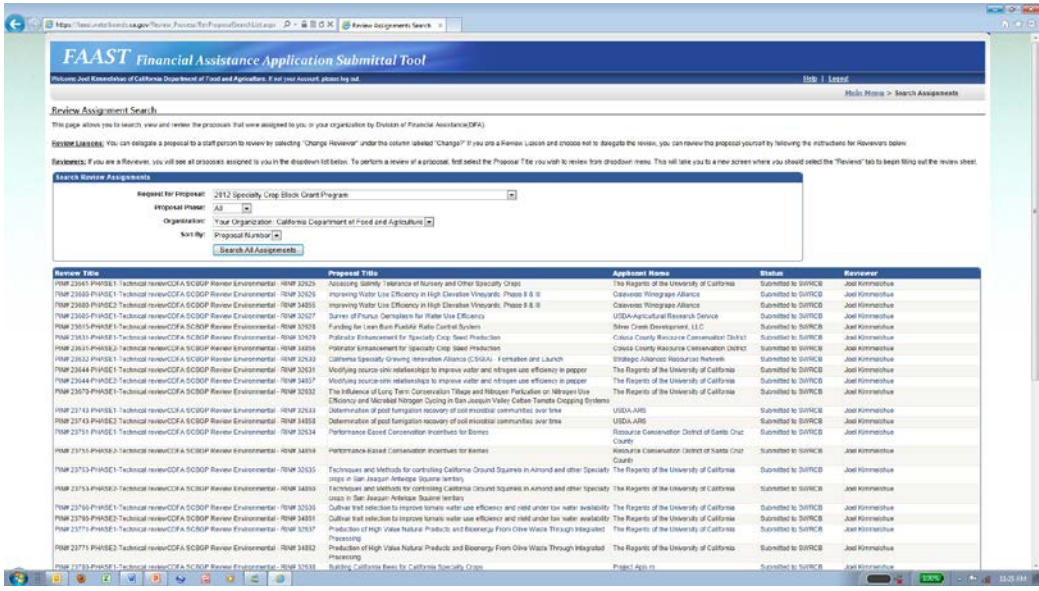
Technical Review Committee 2009 - 2012 Membership

Total Members =167

- Two year members = 25
- Three year members = 5
- Four year members = 4

Reviewers Perspective

- History
- Focus areas (defined and undefined)
- FAAST tool
- Committee dynamics/diversity
- Program successes/back checks



Review Committee Development

- Year 1
  - Less reviewers, Less proposals
- Years 2, 3 and 4
  - More reviewers, More proposals
  - CDFA managed appropriately based on feedback and volume
  - Not afraid to change and did so proactively
- Program has more reviewers now and process has been modified (e.g. A and B groups)
- Shows interest in reviewer community & accommodation/dedication from CDFA

Review Committee Focus Areas

- Review Criteria - Scored
  - Project Purpose
  - Expected Measureable Outcomes
  - Performance Monitoring Plan
  - Work Plan
  - Budget and Budget Narrative
  - Project Commitment
  - Impact
  - Etc.

Review Committee Focus Areas

- Commonly discussed "other" areas – "common sense test"
  - Reasonableness of funding – both high & low
  - Past success and reputation
  - Collaborators
  - State of the science/markets
  - Who knows the industry impacts?
  - How will this proposal impact the industry?
- Method - Combination of defined criteria and practical intellectual discussion

https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov/Login.aspx

FAAST - Financial Assistan...

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- Plans/Policies
- Programs
- Decisions Pending and Opportunities for Public Participation

FAAST LINKS

- FAQ's
- User Manual
- Active RFP's
- Public Search Tool
- System Requirements
- Contact Us

DIVISION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE LINKS

- Division of Financial Assistance Home Page
- Proposals & Solicitations
- Funding Programs

FAAST *Financial Assistance Application Submittal Tool*

The Division of Financial Assistance (Division) administers the implementation of the State Water Resources Control Board's (State Water Board) financial assistance programs. The Division administers funding for construction of municipal sewage and water recycling facilities, watershed protection projects, nonpoint source pollution control projects, etc. For specific information regarding available funding programs, please visit the Division of Financial Assistance, web site.

The Financial Assistance Application Submittal Tool (FAAST) was developed to provide an efficient means for project proponents to apply for the loan and grant funding offered by the Division. A valid FAAST user account is needed to access FAAST.

CONTACT US:
If you have questions or for further assistance, please call State Water Board Staff at: 1-866-434-1083 Monday thru Friday 8:00AM - 5:00PM, or email FAAST_ADMIN@waterboards.ca.gov.

LOG ONTO FAAST

Username:

Password :

Note: Password is case sensitive

Log Onto FAAST

RETRIEVE PASSWORD

Forgot your password?

Retrieve Password

CREATE FAAST ACCOUNT

Create an Account

PUBLIC SEARCH TOOL

Use the Public Search Tool to view and download applications submitted via FAAST.

Public Search Tool

FAAST Tool

- Excellent submittal, compilation, and review tool
- Allows for appropriate review flexibility and scoring
- Many still use personal spreadsheet summaries for comparison purposes, but only for management, notes, etc, not overall scoring

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Committee Dynamics/Diversity

- Maintain diversity of industry and knowledge base
- Maintain both public and private sector representatives
- Keep recruiting and mixing up the review teams
- Workload (although not onerous) dictates/demands serious reviewers – nice balance

Program Successes

- By the time it is all complete, the review process is thorough and comprehensive
- Results in detailed, objective and defensible reviews via dual process
- Review process is self-selecting
  - Not an easy task
  - Takes dedication
  - Reviewers stay/sign on for a reason
- Careful and thorough annual review process
- Complements should be given to all CDFA staff associated with this program