This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Doc. No. AMS–FV–11–0089]

Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) Inviting Applications for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program–Farm Bill (SCBGP–FB)

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) announces the availability of approximately $55 million in grant funds, less USDA administrative costs, for fiscal year (FY) 2012, to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. SCBGP–FB funds are authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (the Farm Bill). State departments of agriculture are encouraged to develop their grant applications promptly. State departments of agriculture interested in obtaining grant program funds are invited to submit applications to USDA. State departments of agriculture, meaning agencies, commissions, or departments of a State government responsible for agriculture within the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are eligible to apply.

DATES: Applications must be received between February 8, 2012 and not later than July 11, 2012.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Trista Etzig, Phone: (202) 690–4942, email: trista.etzig@ams.usda.gov or your State department of agriculture listed on the SCGBP and SCGBP–FB Web site at www.ams.usda.gov/scgbp.


The SCBGP–FB assists State departments of agriculture in solely enhancing the competitiveness of U.S. specialty crops. Specialty crops are defined as fruits and vegetables, dried fruit, tree nuts, horticulture, nursery crops (including floriculture). AMS encourages states to develop projects solely to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops pertaining to the following issues affecting the specialty crop industry: increasing child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops; improving efficiency and reducing costs of distribution systems; assisting all entities in the specialty crop distribution chain in developing “Good Agricultural Practices,” “Good Handling Practices,” “Good Manufacturing Practices,” and in cost-share arrangements for funding audits of such systems for small farmers, packers and processors; investing in specialty crop research, including research to focus on conservation and environmental outcomes; enhancing food safety; developing new and improved seed varieties and specialty crops; pest and disease control; and development of organic and sustainable production practices.

States may wish to consider submitting grants that increase the competitiveness of specialty crop farmers, including Native American and disadvantaged farmers. Increasing competitiveness may include developing local and regional food systems, and improving food access in underserved communities.

Projects that support biobased products and bioenergy and energy programs, including biofuels and other alternative uses for agricultural and forestry commodities (development of biobased products) should see the USDA energy Web site at: http://www.energymatrix.usda.gov/ for information on how to submit those projects for consideration to the energy programs supported by USDA. Also, agricultural cooperatives, producer networks, producer associations, local governments, nonprofit corporations, public health corporations, economic development corporations, regional farmers’ market authorities and Tribal governments that are interested in submitting projects that support farmers’ markets that do not solely enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops should visit the Farmers’ Market Promotion Program (FMPP) Web site at: www.ams.usda.gov/fmpp for information on how to submit those projects for consideration to FMPP.

For further information, the SCBGP and SCBGP–FB Web site at

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outreach to specialty crop stakeholders to receive and consider public comment to identify state funding priorities needs, including any focus on multi-
state projects in enhancing the
competitiveness of specialty crops.
Provide the identified funding priority areas. Describe the methods used to
identify socially disadvantaged and
beginning farmers and reach out to these
groups about the SCBGP–FB. Identify by
project title if an award was made to
either a socially disadvantaged farmer or
a beginning farmer. If steps were not
taken to conduct outreach to socially
disadvantaged and beginning farmers,
provide a justification for why not.
Provide a description of the affirmative
steps taken to conduct a competitive
grant process. Describe the methods
used to solicit proposals that met
identified specialty crop funding
priority needs. Include the number of
grant proposals that were received.
Describe how members on the review
panel were selected to ensure they were
free from conflicts of interest and
consisted of a community of experts in
various fields, who were qualified and
able to perform impartial reviews.
Describe the methods used to solicit
requests from the State department of agriculture to lead and
partner with the State
department of agriculture will
be collected.
Performance measures may be long
or short term. Performance measures
must define an event or condition
that is external to the project and
that is of direct importance to
the intended beneficiaries and/or the
public. The performance measures
may be quantitative, such as the
number of farmer participation
in crop growing activities, or
qualitative, such as the
effectiveness of an outreach
program and that costs are
reasonable and allowable.
(a) Personnel—For each project
participant, indicate their title, percent
FTE, and corresponding salary for the
FTE. Show the total for all SCBGP–FB
funded personnel.
(b) Fringe benefits—Provide the rate
of fringe benefits for each project
participant’s salary described in the
personnel section. Show the total for all
SCBGP–FB funded fringe benefits.
(c) Travel—Provide the following
information in the narrative if
applicable: Destination; purpose of
trip; number of trips; number of people
traveling; number of days traveling;
estimated airfare costs; estimated
ground transportation costs; estimated
lodging and meals costs; and estimated
mileage rate and costs for the travel.
Show the total for all SCBGP–FB
funded travel.
(d) Equipment—Provide an itemized
list of equipment purchases or rentals,
along with a brief narrative on the
intended use of each equipment item,
and the cost for all the equipment
purchases or rentals. Show the total for
all SCBGP–FB funded equipment.
(e) Supplies—Provide an itemized
list and estimate the dollar amount for each
item. Show the total for all SCBGP–FB
funded supplies.
(f) Contractual—Provide a short
description of the services each contract
covers. Indicate if the cost is a flat rate
to hourly rate. Indicate the flat rate
fee or hourly rate to be applied. If
hourly rates exceed the salary of a GS–
14 step 10 Federal employee in your
area (for more information please go to
www.opm.gov and click on Salaries and
Wages), please provide a justification.
List general categories of items the
contract covers such as professional
services, travel, lodging, indirect costs,
etc. Show the total for all SCBGP–FB
funded contractual.
(g) Other—Provide a detailed
description of all other direct costs such as
mailings, postage, express mail, faxes,
and telephone long distance charges;
speaker/trainer fees to include the
amount of the speaker’s fees and a
description of the services they are
providing; publication costs to include the
estimated cost of printing of
brochures and other program materials
or scientific or technical journals as well
as an estimate of the number of pieces
to be printed/published; data collection
to include the estimated costs of
collecting performance data to measure
the project outcome measures; and the
costs of holding a conference or
meeting. If meals are budgeted for a
conference or meeting for reasons other than meals associated with travel per diem, provide an adequate justification for why these costs should not be considered entertainment costs. Show the total for all SCBGP–FB funded other.

(h) Indirect Costs—Indicate percent of indirect costs. Show the total for all SCBGP–FB funded indirect charges.

Indirect costs for this grant period

should not exceed 10 percent of any proposed budget. (i) Program Income— Indicate the nature or source of program income (i.e., registration fees).

(i) Estimate the amount of program income. Describe how the income will be used to further enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

[9] Project Partner Oversight. Describe who or what organization will oversee the project activities and how will oversight be performed to ensure proper and efficient administration for each project.

(10) Project Commitment. Describe briefly what specialty crop stakeholders outside the lead organization support this project and how all grant project stakeholders work toward the goals and outcomes of the project.

(11) Multi-state Projects. If the project is a multi-state project, identify the other states that are participating, describe how the states are going to collaborate effectively with related projects with one state assuming the coordinating role. Indicate the percent of the budget covered by each state.

Each State department of agriculture that submits an application that is reviewed and approved by AMS is to receive a base grant of 181,109.88 to be apportioned pro rata to the remaining States which should not exceed 10 percent of any proposed budget.

AMS will allocate the remainder of the grant funds based on the proportion of the value of specialty crop production in the state in relation to the national value of specialty crop production using the latest available (2010 National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) cash receipt data for the 50 States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, 2007 Census of Agriculture cash receipts for Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and 2002 Census of Agriculture cash receipts for American Samoa) specialty crop production data in all states whose applications are accepted.

The amount of the base grant plus the proportion of the amount available to each state department of agriculture shall be:

(1) Alabama ........................................... $400,934.95
(2) Alaska ........................................... 194,889.46
(3) American Samoa ............................... 215,529.21
(4) Arizona ........................................... 1,263,013.24
(5) Arkansas ........................................... 255,175.60
(6) California ........................................ 18,671,947.22
(7) Colorado ........................................ 680,621.81
(8) Connecticut ..................................... 403,982.43
(9) Delaware ........................................ 244,484.20
(10) District of Columbia ....................... 181,109.88
(11) Florida ........................................... 4,755,725.74
(12) Georgia ........................................ 1,130,698.80
(13) Guam ............................................. 192,954.05
(14) Hawaii .......................................... 378,686.07
(15) Idaho ............................................. 928,736.45
(16) Illinois .......................................... 632,932.59
(17) Indiana .......................................... 396,023.16
(18) Iowa .............................................. 271,120.00
(19) Kansas .......................................... 258,302.52
(20) Kentucky ........................................ 260,991.65
(21) Louisiana ........................................ 350,782.43
(22) Maine ............................................ 402,360.32
(23) Maryland ....................................... 393,434.24
(24) Massachusetts ................................. 436,930.75
(25) Michigan ......................................... 1,337,219.16
(26) Minnesota ....................................... 703,253.61
(27) Mississippi ..................................... 281,843.82
(28) Missouri .......................................... 350,592.48
(29) Montana .......................................... 326,477.01
(30) Nebraska ........................................ 331,838.05
(31) Nevada .......................................... 259,473.57
(32) New Hampshire ............................... 238,459.35
(33) New Jersey ...................................... 814,882.47
(34) New Mexico .................................... 514,648.73
(35) New York ........................................ 1,114,085.81
(36) North Carolina ................................ 1,151,269.80
(37) North Dakota .................................. 614,984.68
(38) Northern Mariana Islands .................. 182,504.34
(39) Ohio .............................................. 642,019.98
(40) Oklahoma ....................................... 384,159.91
(41) Oregon .......................................... 1,487,908.90
(42) Pennsylvania .................................. 1,027,509.84
(43) Puerto Rico ..................................... 381,396.61
(44) Rhode Island ................................... 217,256.69
(45) South Carolina ................................ 552,450.81
(46) South Dakota .................................. 207,600.20
(47) Tennessee ....................................... 527,123.55
(48) Texas ............................................. 1,850,776.76
(49) U.S. Virgin Islands .......................... 182,263.14
(50) Utah .............................................. 289,055.09
(51) Vermont ......................................... 223,751.88
(52) Virginia ......................................... 495,018.42
(53) Washington .................................... 3,320,842.83
(54) West Virginia ................................. 217,160.21
(55) Wisconsin ...................................... 882,214.61
(56) Wyoming ....................................... 205,501.72

Funds not obligated will be allocated pro rata to the remaining States which applied during the specified grant application period to be solely expended on projects previously approved in their State plan. AMS will notify the States as to the procedures for applying for the reallocated funds. AMS requires applicants to submit SCBGP–FB applications electronically through the central Federal grants web site, www.grants.gov instead of mailing hard copy documents. Original signatures are not needed on the SF–424 and SF–424B when applying through www.grants.gov and applicants are not required to submit any paper documents to AMS. Applicants are strongly urged to familiarize themselves with Federal grants web site and begin the application process well before the application deadline. For information on how to apply electronically, please consult http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp. AMS will send an email confirmation when applications are received by the AMS office.

SCBGP–FB is listed in the “Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance” under number 10.170 and subject agencies must adhere to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which bars discrimination in all federally assisted programs.


Robert C. Keeney,
Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency

Commodity Credit Corporation

Information Collection Request; Assignment and Joint Payment Elections

AGENCY: Farm Service Agency and Commodity Credit Corporation, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) are seeking comments from all interested individuals and organizations on an extension and a revision of a currently approved information collection associated with Assignment and Joint Payment Elections. The information collection is in support of 7 CFR part 1404, which sets forth the manner in which a person may voluntarily assign a cash payment made by FSA or CCC to a third party. In addition, a payment recipient may voluntarily elect to have a cash payment made jointly to the payment recipient and a third party.

DATES: We will consider comments that we receive by April 9, 2012.

ADDRESSES: We invite you to submit comments on this notice. In your comments, include the date, volume, and page number of this issue of the Federal Register, the OMB control number and the title of the information collection. You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

 Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to http://www.regulations.gov. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.