

KDA Announces Specialty Crop Grant Opportunity

The Kansas Department of Agriculture is accepting applications for the 2017 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Funds for the program are awarded to the agency by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service. The funds are in turn granted to projects and organizations that work to improve the specialty crop industry.

The purpose of the specialty crop program is to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Specialty crops are defined by the USDA as "fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops, including floriculture." This opportunity supports the KDA's mission of providing an environment that enhances and encourages economic growth of the agriculture industry in Kansas.

The Agricultural Marketing Service reviews each application. Approved states receive an estimated base amount plus an amount based on the average of the most recent available value of specialty crop cash receipts and the acreage of specialty crop production in the state. In 2016, Kansas received \$283,492.76 for the grant program. In 2017 it is expected that Kansas will receive approximately \$295,000.00.

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program applications will be evaluated by a team of external reviewers. The team will rate proposals on their ability to successfully promote specialty crops in Kansas and make a positive impact on the Kansas economy. Those recommendations will be submitted to the Kansas Secretary of Agriculture, who will make the final awards.

Applications are due to KDA no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 12, 2017. For more information, please download the 2017 application from the website at www.agriculture.ks.gov/specialtycrop