

2018 Specialty Crop Block Grants Awarded

The Kansas Department of Agriculture has been awarded \$349,025 through the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Funds for the program are presented by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Marketing Service. The purpose of the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program is to increase opportunities for specialty crops. Specialty crops are defined by USDA as “fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture.” The Kansas Department of Agriculture has selected other recipients to further utilize the funds.

The following is a list of Kansas projects that will be funded by the grant:

- **Children First: CEO Kansas Inc., Fresh Food Matters, \$61,512.00 — Educate low-income children and youth about specialty crops, as well as host six farm-to-table lunch events to provide knowledge about specialty crops to those living in low-income neighborhoods.**
- **Kansas State University, Taking the Next Step in Pulse Crop Development for Kansas, \$74,866.00 — Partner with Kansas State University to identify genetic markers in field peas for heat stress tolerance relevant to Kansas growing conditions, as well as identify germplasm useful in breeding pea varieties.**
- **North Central Regional Planning Commission, Expanding Production and Markets of Fruits and Vegetables in North Central Kansas, \$39,750.00 — Expand north central Kansas growth-oriented fruit and vegetable growers and expand the local market for production through grocers.**
- **Extension Education Foundation, Inc., Growing Specialty Crop Producers in South Central Kansas, \$33,707.00 — Implement a regionally-appropriate Growing Growers program in South Central Kansas and Sedgwick County.**
- **Kansas State University, Expansion of Blueberry Production in Kansas [Add story](#) with Greenhouse and High Tunnel Methods, \$33,707.00 — Evaluate two different hydroponic systems for greenhouse production of six different blueberry cultivars to determine yield and water use compared to traditional production techniques.**
- **Kansas Department of Agriculture, KDA Education Program: Great Lakes Expo Fruit, Vegetable and Farm Market, \$35,527.62 — Provide a continuing education opportunity for specialty crop growers to attend the Great Lakes Expo located in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in December 2018.**

- **Kansas State University, Growing the Vegetable Producers Community with a Specialty Crop Growers Association, \$36,158.00 — Renovate the existing Kansas Vegetable Growers Association into the Kansas Specialty Crop Growers Association by conducting statewide educational outreach and establishment of a web and social media presence.**

For more information about the Specialty Crop Block Grant program, including expanded summaries of this year's recipients, visit agriculture.ks.gov/specialtycropblockgrant.