



NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Multi-state grant encourages collaboration, enhances competitiveness of specialty crops

INDIANAPOLIS (July 31, 2017) – The [Indiana State Department of Agriculture](#) (ISDA) is now accepting applications for the 2017 [Specialty Crop Multi-State Grant Program](#) (SCMP), a competitive grant created to help develop solutions to issues affecting the specialty crop industry across state boundaries.

“Bringing partners together from other states is a great way to strengthen the specialty crop sector and address some of the critical issues facing growers today,” said Ted McKinney, ISDA Director. “As much as we can, we want to enhance the competitiveness of our agricultural products, and this program, open for the first time to Indiana, provides an avenue to make that happen for this sector.”

Funded by [USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service](#) (AMS), the program was designed to address plant pests, diseases, and crop-specific issues; support food safety and research; and increase marketing opportunities for specialty crops like fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture.

To ensure collaboration, every project must include at least two out-of-state partners, which can be made up of state agencies, tribal governments, universities, non-profits and other specialty crop organizations. The partners are encouraged to develop projects that bring together teams to research and cultivate solutions to address the needs of specialty crop growers.

AMS specifically encourages projects that will:

- Develop adaptation and mitigation strategies for farmers in drought-stricken regions of the country.
- Increase opportunities for new and beginning farmers.
- Develop strong local and regional food systems.
- Protect pollinator habitats and improve pollinator health.
- Support the growth of organic specialty crops.
- Benefit underserved communities and veterans.
- Involve contributions to the project by partners of cash and/or in-kind resources as appropriate.
- Improve producer and facility capacity to comply with the requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act.

To apply for the SCMP grant, please visit www.in.gov/isda/2474.htm. Proposals are due September 18, 2017, by 5:00 p.m. (EDT). For additional grant assistance, please contact Ann McCambridge, ISDA's Grants Program Manager, at amccambridge@isda.in.gov or 317.419.0200.

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ABOUT ISDA

The [Indiana State Department of Agriculture](#) (ISDA) was established as a separate state agency by the Legislature in 2005. The Director is appointed by the Governor and is a member of the Governor's Cabinet. Administratively, ISDA reports to [Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch](#), who also serves as Indiana's Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development. Major responsibilities include advocacy for Indiana agriculture at the local, state and federal level, managing soil conservation programs, promoting economic development and agricultural innovation, serving as a regulatory ombudsman for agricultural businesses, and licensing grain firms throughout the state.



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