



NEWS RELEASE
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Grants available to cultivate Indiana's specialty crop sector

INDIANAPOLIS (Feb. 16, 2018) —The [Indiana State Department of Agriculture](#) (ISDA) is now accepting proposals for projects designed to enhance the competitiveness of Indiana's specialty crops, which include fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops (including floriculture). Applications are due to ISDA by March 26, 2018.

"Various organizations have benefited from grants from USDA, and I am excited to see what projects will come to fruition through the funds awarded," said Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch, Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development. "Encouraging competition and innovation will help take Indiana agriculture to the Next Level."

Funded by USDA's [Specialty Crop Block Grant Program](#), the grants are available to non-profits, producer organizations, academic institutions, government agencies and other agricultural organizations for specialty crop research, education or market development.

Qualified projects must benefit the industry as a whole rather than one product, individual or organization. Priority will be given to projects that focus on issues affecting the specialty crop industry, such as reducing costs of distribution systems or developing new and improved seed varieties.

"Along with traditional row crops, like corn and soybeans, and livestock agriculture, Indiana is home to a robust, thriving specialty crop sector," said Bruce Kettler, ISDA Director. "To remain competitive, we must continue to look for new, innovative ways to grow this important sector of our economy, and these grants provide the opportunity to make that happen."

A full list of specialty crops is available on USDA's [website](#). Grant funds will be awarded for projects up to three years in duration.

For more information about the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, please visit <http://www.in.gov/isda/2474.htm> or contact ISDA Grant Program Manager Ann McCambridge at AMcCambridge@isda.in.gov.

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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. 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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