



STATE OF IDAHO



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ISDA Selects Projects for Use of Specialty Crop Funds

Specialty crop projects across Idaho will soon receive funding from the Idaho State Department of Agriculture, thanks to the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. The State of Idaho allocated \$865,672.94 from the federal program to projects that will enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

The Department announced a competitive grant process in January and began accepting applications. Eighteen grant applications were submitted totaling more than \$1.2 million. A panel of industry representatives reviewed and scored the applications and provided input to ISDA for final selection. A total of 17 projects were selected for funding. These projects include research, educational and promotional activities for commodities such as potatoes, beans, grapes, seeds, apples, onions, stone fruit, mint and nursery.

"The Department is pleased that we can fund so many projects this year," ISDA Director Celia Gould said. "These projects truly will enhance the competitiveness of Idaho's specialty crop industry and generate increased economic returns to Idaho agriculture."

The Department's State Plan, including the 17 funded projects, was submitted to USDA on July 29. Final approval is expected from USDA in August or September.

Program requirements governing eligibility were published in the Federal Register. Specialty crops were defined to include fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture. Eligible projects were required to benefit more than one organization and enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

ISDA is expecting to receive Specialty Crop Grant funding from USDA again in 2011 and 2012. If you have questions about the grant program, please contact Lacey Menasco at lacey.menasco@agri.idaho.gov or 208-332-8538.

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