



STATE OF IDAHO



C. L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR
CELIA R. GOULD
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lacey Menasco
208-332-8538

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ISDA is Seeking Specialty Crop Grant Applications

Boise - The Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) is pleased to announce the competitive solicitation process to award Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. The United States Department of Agriculture has allocated these funds to the state and ISDA will be passing them through as competitive grants. Funds will be available to interested local, state, and federal government, non-profit and for-profit organizations, and universities as competitive grants.

Eligible project(s) will solely enhance the competitiveness of U.S. grown specialty crops in either domestic or foreign markets and projects must benefit more than one product or organization. Projects may include, but are not limited to, pest and disease control, sustainability, enhancing food safety, improving efficiency and reducing costs of distribution systems, developing new and improved seed varieties, increasing child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops; specialty crop research, and assisting all entities in the specialty crop distribution chain in developing "Good Agricultural Practices", "Good Handling Practices", "Good Manufacturing Practices", and in cost-share arrangements for funding audits of such systems for small farmers, packers, and processors.

"We are looking for quality projects that will have a significant and lasting impact on Idaho's specialty crop industry," commented Director Celia Gould, ISDA, "The evaluation committee will be looking for feasible proposals that will benefit a great number of producers with a good return on investment."

Specialty crops include fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture. Additional details including qualifications, guidelines and application process for the competitive grant program are available at www.agri.idaho.gov Applications are due to ISDA by July 1, 2009. 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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