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Specialty crop grants available to Alaska applicants

(Palmer, AK) – The Division of Agriculture is now seeking applicants for the annual Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, a federal grant program administered by the division.

The division intends to administer grants for multiple projects and grant awards will be divided into two tiers. Tier I projects will have a maximum funding amount of \$15,000 and Tier II projects will receive funding amounts between \$15,000 and \$40,000.

Grant applicants must provide a letter of intent to the division by 5 p.m., April 7, 2016. The Request for Proposals with application and deadline information can be found at http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/Grants/Final_16_SCBG_RFP.pdf. Two webinars will also be held to answer questions on March 17 from 2:30-3:30 p.m. and on March 25 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. To register for the webinars visit <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4842016484749153281> and <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2370777239599518721>, respectively.

The purpose of the grant is to enhance the competitiveness of Alaska Grown specialty crops, sustain the livelihood of farmers, and strengthen local communities. Only projects related to specialty crops are allowed under this funding source. Specialty crops are defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and horticulture and nursery crops. Many Alaska Grown products – including livestock, dairy, fuel/feed grains, hay, and aquaculture – are excluded from this grant program due to USDA restrictions. A list of USDA-eligible specialty crops can be found at <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp/specialty-crop>.

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