November 19, 2019

WVDA Now Accepting Request for Applications for 2020 Specialty Crop Block Grants

Charleston W.Va. -- The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) is now seeking Request for Applications for 2020 Specialty Crop Block Grants. Funds awarded must be used to enhance the production, processing and consumption of specialty crops in West Virginia. Applications are due January 8, 2020.

“One of the largest barriers to small business development is access to capital. This is even more true for agriculture-based businesses,” said Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. “The goal of these grants is to bridge that capital gap by either conducting research or finding ways to expand markets for specialty crop businesses.”

The SCBGP is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered by the WVDA. Grant recipients have two years to plan, implement and gather data on their respective projects. Specialty crops are defined as fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture.

"For West Virginia agriculture and the state’s economy to move forward, we must think small. Focusing on how we develop niche markets to diversify our economy will be key to West Virginia’s future. We encourage anyone who has a unique idea on how to do just that to apply,” Leonhardt said.

There are two changes for FY 2020 grants. First, the floor and ceiling for grant funding has been adjusted to $15,000 and $100,000 respectively. Second, projects will run for two-year cycles instead of the previous three-year cycles.

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The USDA awarded $72.4 million to 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the five U.S. territories. The WVDA anticipates receiving approximately $270,000 from which multiple grants will be awarded.

Application, instructions and other information can be found at https://agriculture.wv.gov/divisions/marketinganddevelopment/Pages/Grant-and-Training-Opportunities.aspx.

For more information, contact Leslie Boggess at lboggess@wvda.us or 304-558-2210.

*The West Virginia Department of Agriculture protects plant, animal and human health through a variety of scientific, regulatory and consumer protection programs. The Commissioner of Agriculture is one of six statewide elected officials who sits on the Board of Public Works.*

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