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Arkansas Agriculture Department Seeks Input from Specialty Crop Producers

LITTLE ROCK, ARK. – The Arkansas Agriculture Department (AAD) is seeking input from Arkansas stakeholders to identify funding priorities in the 2018 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. The AAD is looking to farmers for information about what kind of efforts, programs, research, and marketing opportunities would help improve their business and market accessibility the most. A short survey is available, [here](#).

Funds available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered by the AAD are available to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Eligible priorities include establishing specialty crop producer/grower associations, marketing campaigns for specialty crops, specialty crop research, establishing or sharing best practices for the production of specialty crops, increasing consumption of specialty crops, or other areas that will enhance an aspect of the specialty crop industry in Arkansas.

“Arkansas is a dynamic agricultural state, with many unique opportunities to make our specialty crop industry more competitive and more accessible,” says Arkansas Agriculture Secretary Wes Ward. “We want to use the USDA funding that is dedicated specifically to specialty crops in a way that is most beneficial to Arkansas farmers and producers. Stakeholder input from the survey will help us prioritize the industry’s needs.”

Specialty crops include fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, flowers, medicinal and culinary herbs, Christmas trees, horticulture, and pollinator health. Find previous Specialty Crop Block Grant Program recipients and more AAD grant information, [here](#). The application period for Specialty Crop Block Grants is anticipated to open later in February.

The AAD is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture and forestry to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation. Learn more at www.aad.arkansas.gov.

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The Arkansas Agriculture Department offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

