



Washington State Department of Agriculture
News Release

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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WSDA seeks proposals to promote agricultural markets, reduce trade barriers
Proposals due April 2 for two separate grant programs

OLYMPIA – More than \$400,000 is available to promote Washington agriculture through projects that increase sales, promote specialty crops, or reduce trade barriers for the state’s diverse food and agricultural commodities. Proposals for separate state and federal programs are due April 2 for review by the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA).

WSDA market promotion and trade barrier grants

Several years ago, the Washington state Legislature established a matching fund program for WSDA to administer grants that expose buyers to the state’s agricultural products and enhance market access. Current contracts for work to be completed through state funding include promotion of the nursery and seafood industries, support for farmers markets, and promotions of fruits and vegetables.

Eligible candidates for the \$245,000 in state grants include commodity commissions, public entities, associations, or nonprofit organizations that represent agricultural and food producers. The grant awards will range from \$5,000 to \$20,000. Applicants must provide a combination of cash matching funds and in-kind contributions. State grant contracts will be issued in July. Work must be completed by June 30, 2008.

“These state grants help our agriculture-related businesses keep competitive in the global market,” said Janet Leister, manager of WSDA’s International Marketing Program. “They also present great opportunities for local farm organizations to increase the direct marketing of local farm products.”

USDA specialty crop block grant program

WSDA will also do the initial screening for proposals that compete for about \$165,000 in federal funds available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). The goal of this funding is to enhance the competitiveness of “specialty crops” such as fruits, vegetables and nursery crops. More details about the USDA specialty crop block grant program is available at www.ams.usda.gov/fv/scbgrp.html.

“Priority will be given to proposals that target marketing and research,” Leister said.

The federal grants will be issued in a range of \$10,000 to \$30,000 and require cash matching funds and in-kind contributions. USDA makes the final determination of which proposals to fund. Work under the USDA specialty crop grants may be performed over a two-year period.

Information and separate applications for either state or federal grants are available from Janet Leister at (360) 902-1931 or e-mail jleister@agr.wa.gov.

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