

OREGON SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM FY2013 PROJECTS

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) received funding from the United States Department of Agriculture Specialty Crop Block Grant Program to fund the following 22 projects, which seek to enhance the competitiveness of Oregon's specialty crops.

State allocation:	\$1,513,750.36
Indirect Costs & Coordination/Outreach:	\$ 134,734.36
Project allocation:	\$1,379,016.00

ORGANIZATION: Oregon Department of Agriculture, Market Access and Certification Program Area

PROJECT TITLE:

USDA Agricultural Trade Office Partnership: Promoting Oregon Specialty Crops to Key Asian Markets

ABSTRACT: This proposal will bring several Oregon specialty crop producers and exporters together with the Oregon Department of Agriculture to execute a series of trade missions and promotional events in two major Asian cities. These missions will be closely coordinated with existing in-country activities planned, or traditionally done, by USDA Agricultural Trade Offices in the targeted cities/countries, to leverage expertise, contacts and resources.

Demand continues to rise in Asia for high quality food and agricultural products. The Chinese market for retail foods is expected to grow by 51% over the next five years as consumers gain more spending power. Growth in Korea is much more modest at 4% during the same period; but, as in Japan, a rapidly aging farm population, limited arable land and concerns over food safety all underscore the need for imports and opportunity for suppliers.

We believe this project will provide needed synergy in terms of expanded participation in the foreign posts' events, while concurrently adding value to Oregon specialty crop producers' efforts to engage or expand key Asian markets. Activities will include, but are not limited to: targeted trade meetings, product showcases, trade tastings, and educational seminars.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$54,000

ORGANIZATION: Oregon Department of Agriculture, Market Access and Certification Program Area

PROJECT TITLE:

Bringing More Oregon Fruits and Vegetables into School Cafeterias Phase IV – Focus on the producer

ABSTRACT: Building on a previously funded Specialty Crop Block Grants this project seeks to expand the successful Oregon Harvest for Schools toolkit. This project addresses the need to create 12 additional months of toolkit materials to complete 36 months (3 years) of toolkit materials available for monthly promotion campaigns featuring Oregon fruits and vegetables, and adds new interactive promotional elements that focus on the producers. The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) Child Nutrition Program and the Corvallis Environmental Center (CEC) seek to increase market opportunities for Oregon fruit and vegetable producers by removing barriers to school sales and by educating consumers – students and their families - about the value of Oregon fruits and vegetables. This project will increase the amount of Oregon grown and processed fruits and vegetables in schools across the state, and the likelihood that students will eat them.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$54,276

ORGANIZATION: Oregon Department of Agriculture, Market Access and Certification Program Area

PROJECT TITLE: Korea Market Development

ABSTRACT: This grant project will provide market development and trade servicing in the Korean market to increase competitiveness of Oregon specialty crops. The Korean market has an affluent consumer with very sophisticated taste. The Korean consumer is focused on health and wellness and food safety. These qualities of the Korean consumer make Oregon specialty crops desirable to importers, distributors and buyers in the Korean market. This project will increase Oregon's specialty crop representation in the Korean market, and coordinated marketing and public relations activities will help drive attention and detail to the unique quality of Oregon's specialty crop export products.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$83,810

ORGANIZATION: Oregon Department of Agriculture, Market Access and Certification Program Area

PROJECT TITLE: Export Certification Requirement Initiative to Southeast Asia

ABSTRACT: Approximately 80% of agricultural production in Oregon leaves the state and 40% is exported to overseas markets. To facilitate further economic prosperity, create jobs, and continue this trend, new markets must be secured for a variety of specialty crop products. Due to its proximity to Southeast Asia, Oregon has considered the countries of Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam as emerging markets with considerable export potential. One of the major barriers in exporting plant products to these countries is a lack of comprehensive understanding of product certification and related phytosanitary restrictions by the Oregon specialty crop industry. Another key component of doing business in Southeast Asia is establishing dynamic, personal relationships with professional counterparts to generate productive, technical discussions to open and expand markets. The goal of this proposal is to clarify phytosanitary measures and certification requirements for targeted Oregon agricultural specialty crop products to generate and expand new markets we will do this by coordinating meetings with US trade specialists with the respective regulatory authorities with the National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) of these countries.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$30,391

ORGANIZATION: Adelante Mujeres

PROJECT TITLE: Developing Diversified Local Markets for New and Beginning Latino Farmers

ABSTRACT: As Oregon follows the nation-wide trend of an aging farmer population, there is a great need to train and encourage a new generation of farmers. There are many young, talented and passionate farmworkers who have the necessary skill set to become full-time farmers as well as to narrow this widening age gap. Adelante Agricultura, the sustainable farming program at Adelante Mujeres, has eight years of experience assisting with this process. We provide production and marketing assistance, access to land for training and business capital for Latino farmworkers who want to start small, diversified and sustainably operated farming operations. As we set out to train this next generation of farmers, it has the effect of increasing the competitiveness of specialty crops in Oregon. Our project objectives are: 1) to expand Adelante Agricultura's marketing training and distribution efforts in order to improve the sales of these small farmers and; 2) to create a replicable model that can be emulated in the region.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$74,255

ORGANIZATION: Corvallis Environmental Center

PROJECT TITLE: Serving Specialty Crops at Schools

ABSTRACT: The *Serving Specialty Crops at Schools* project expands access to Oregon specialty crops in schools. The project will provide schools throughout the state a series of recipes and menus that specifically utilize Oregon specialty crops, have been developed in a school setting and tested with children, meet USDA guidelines for the National Breakfast and Lunch

program, and complement and leverage existing Oregon Harvest for Schools promotional and educational materials.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$89,796

ORGANIZATION: Earl Brown and Sons Inc.

PROJECT TITLE: GlobalG.A.P. Food Safety Implementation in the Milton Freewater Valley

ABSTRACT: The goal of this project is to successfully certify tree fruit growers in the Milton Freewater Valley (MFV) in meeting food safety standards. Meeting food safety standards will allow overall market access value for tree fruits in this region of Oregon basis. This project will address food safety requirements and corresponding certification on at least 65% of the total orchard acreage in the MFV and educate growers on how to successfully implement a food safety program. The economic gain from certification and training and education is extremely valuable to the success of food safety in this region because the MFV currently does not have a history of implementing comprehensive food safety programs in the region.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$70,370

ORGANIZATION: Ecotrust

PROJECT TITLE: Schools Reap the Oregon Harvest: Facilitating Market Transactions with Suppliers

ABSTRACT: *Schools Reap the Oregon Harvest* leverages strong existing partnerships and resources to provide Oregon specialty crop suppliers with significantly expanded access to the school food market. Building on the Oregon Harvest for Schools (OH4S) campaign (a previously funded Specialty Crop Block Grant), which makes it easy for school districts to promote Oregon specialty crops, the project addresses an identified gap by facilitating market transactions with all scales and types of suppliers of these crops (large and small producers, aggregators, processors, distributors, wholesalers). The project will increase the competitiveness of OH4S crops by quantifying school district demand, identifying OH4S suppliers and providing them training as needed to work with schools, and facilitating the movement of product from suppliers to schools via an interactive web platform and technical support. Strategies to facilitate mass purchasing by school districts as well as opportunities for cross-over into the broader institutional food market will also be explored. With conservative estimates putting the potential specialty crop market in Oregon schools at more than \$8 million per year, the project represents a significant opportunity to provide ongoing business to suppliers of the specialty crops featured in the OH4S campaign.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$56,990

ORGANIZATION: Food Roots

PROJECT TITLE: North Coast Grown Specialty Crop Project

ABSTRACT: The North Coast Grown Specialty Crop Project will increase and diversify specialty crop production by investing in specialty crop farmers and farmworkers. It will create greater regional consumer and public awareness about the importance of a regional specialty crop industry. This will be accomplished by providing specialty crop producers with access to extended season production infrastructure and creating systems to facilitate access to land; providing bio-region specific and relevant technical training including: production, marketing, food safety and quality control training. While supporting and equipping north coast specialty crop producers for direct markets, the project will explore opportunities to scale up for larger markets. Forty-six percent of Tillamook County's agricultural land is cropland, yet crop sales are only one percent of market value of products sold. The region is blessed with rich soils, mild maritime climate and an abundance of available soil amendments awaiting specialty crop industry development. Food Roots, in partnership with the Port of Tillamook Bay, will utilize three 30' x 96' High Tunnel Hoop Houses for training purposes and also provide extended season infrastructure for farmers in their start up stage. Food Roots will also provide classroom training, 'infield training' and training at other cropland sites.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$99,997

ORGANIZATION: Northwest Food Processors Association (NWFPA)

PROJECT TITLE: Increasing Access to Basic Food Safety Training for Specialty Crop Processing in Oregon

ABSTRACT: Northwest Food Processors Association (NWFPA) will develop and promote online training modules in Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and basic Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points (HACCP), including compliance and recordkeeping in accordance with the Food Safety and Modernization Act (FSMA). Training will be developed leveraging input from Industry Advisory Groups and collaboration with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA). Training will be delivered online to provide an accessible and affordable option for Oregon specialty crop processors, especially for the small and very small processors and those located in geographically isolated areas. As a result of the training, employees from at least 120 companies will access online training modules with 20% of those companies reporting a change in their production practices as a result of the knowledge acquisition. Individuals completing the training will gain knowledge that is critical in preventing procedural errors that may lead to costly recalls for processors, significant compliance management costs for ODA, tragic outbreaks of food-borne illness, and loss of public confidence in the food supply.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$100,000

ORGANIZATION: Oregon Association of Nurseries (OAN)

PROJECT TITLE: Plant Something Awareness Initiative to Support Oregon Nurseries

ABSTRACT: Oregon's nursery industry has declined since 2007 with the economy, losing more than 30% of its value. As the population ages and yard sizes shrink, the interest in traditional gardening has declined. Many retail and wholesale nurseries are struggling to stay in business through these economic and demographic changes. However, the upcoming generation of Millennials has an interest in gardening, but has a knowledge gap that creates resistance to embracing gardening as a hobby.

In 2012, the OAN signed on to the Plant Something™ initiative, a grassroots, retail-focused branding effort first developed by the Arizona Nursery Association (ANA) with the help of USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant funds. The core messaging of this initiative promotes the health, financial and environmental benefits of plants and gardening. The initiative has expanded nationally to 10 other states, one Canadian province (BC) and the Long Island Flower Growers Association. Licensee states collaborate and share promotional materials stretching limited resources. The collaborative approach allows us to focus on and improve the most effective strategies so we can get our message out to more consumers. This increased reach and effectiveness allows us to deliver the maximum value with the capital we invest in this campaign.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$90,250

ORGANIZATION: Oregon Potato Commission

PROJECT TITLE: South East Asia Trade Mission and Educational Outreach

ABSTRACT: The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) in conjunction with the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), the potato commissions from Oregon (OPC) and Washington (WSPC), one Onion representative and representatives from the Oregon Dairy Products Commission (Dairy) will conduct a trade development mission to Vietnam, the Philippines and Hong Kong to extend the market penetration and introduce specialty crop products through specialty product technical seminars with product preparation, handling and proper storage presentations along with buyer meetings and addressing market access issues. The mission composition will consist of growers and packers of fresh and processed specialty crop products such as potatoes and onions that will include market development personnel. The mission will be lead jointly by Katy Coba, Director of the Oregon Department of Agriculture and Bud Hover, Director of the Washington State Department of Agriculture. The Dairy representatives will take advantage of the Directors being on the mission to advance their export opportunities and will cover all of their expenses outside of the specialty crop program.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$35,036

ORGANIZATION: Oregon Raspberry & Blackberry Commission

PROJECT TITLE: Enhancing New Product and Menu Item Development for NW Caneberries

ABSTRACT: This project reaches out to food manufacturing and food service professionals encouraging the use of NW caneberries in new product and menu development. In a cooperative approach, these targeted professionals will be brought to the northwest to interact with USDA breeding programs on industry desired traits for caneberries and to evaluate current selections, linking breeders and end users. Next, experts in several disciplines will educate product/menu R&D personnel about health benefits, dietary uses, functional properties, marketing aspects and recipe formulations in a unique hands on approach, showing how caneberries can be best used in healthy, natural products. This curriculum will be able to be used in future outreach to the food industry to help increase demand for NW caneberries. Additionally, newer caneberry varieties will be professionally tested for functional and chemical properties to provide product development information that is essential for new product creation. NW Packers will work closely with this program to monitor participants chosen and approve new berry varieties to be tested.

New product and menu development in premium products is critical to increasing usage of NW caneberries. Consumers are demanding healthy, natural products in increasing numbers and NW berries need to be poised to fulfill this demand.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$55,407

ORGANIZATION: Oregon State Beekeepers Association

PROJECT TITLE: Enhancing pollination by promoting bee health via Master Beekeeper Program

ABSTRACT: Honey bees are very important pollinators of high value specialty crops and bee pollination is estimated to be worth approximately \$500 million in Oregon. Recent honey bee colony losses attributed to colony collapse disorder and a steady decline of colonies for past two decades have caused serious concern and alarm. As best management practices are becoming more and more important in the wake of these bee declines, appropriate training has become a vital component. There is huge gap in dissemination of current information and knowledge on honey bee best management practices. Very few agricultural professionals are familiar with honey bee management practices and challenges faced by beekeepers. Hence there is an urgent need to train and enhance knowledge base of these agricultural professionals, beekeepers, producers and citizens interested in bees to promote sustainable apiculture and pollination in Oregon.

The primary goal of this grant proposal is to develop the advanced level (Masters level) of the Master Beekeeper Program to educate and train agricultural professionals, beekeepers, farmers and interested citizens. We anticipate that this project will provide advanced training in sustainable beekeeping to 300 beginner beekeepers, 25 commercial beekeepers, 25 extension agents, 50 farmers, 5 ODA and 10 USDA field personnel.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$59,000

ORGANIZATION: Oregon State University North Willamette Research and Extension Center

PROJECT TITLE: Integrating Christmas Tree Best Management Practices from Growing Through Shipping

ABSTRACT: The goal of this project is to engage growers and workers in targeted training to reduce the number of Christmas tree shipments that encounter some type of export restriction or rejection.

This will be accomplished with training sessions for workers and growers in both English and Spanish utilizing two new publications- *Best Management Practices for Christmas tree Export Success* and *Identifying and Managing Christmas Tree Diseases, Pests and other Disorders*. Importantly these publications will be developed at OSU using a Responsive Design. This will allow users to access the information in a number of formats- as printed books or on the web via a wide-range of devices (smartphones, tablets, laptops etc.)

Success of the effort will be evaluated by the learning experiences gained by the participants and a consequent reduction in the number of Christmas trees rejected at export borders. In addition, recognition by export partners that Oregon is seriously trying to identify and control problem pests during the life-cycle of the tree crop will be crucial in maintaining trading partner trust.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$49,971

ORGANIZATION: Oregon Strawberry Commission

PROJECT TITLE: A Roadmap for Oregon Growers to the Fresh Strawberry Market

ABSTRACT:

At its peak in 1957, Oregon had 19,000 acres in strawberry production. By 2012, acreage had decreased to 2,000 acres with 80% destined to processed markets. However, consumer interest in local, fresh strawberries has steadily increased. Buyers such as Fred Meyer and New Seasons have expressed interest in purchasing large quantities of fresh regional strawberries. At present, there are not enough fresh acres harvested to fill demand. To encourage growers to grow more strawberries for this market, the Oregon Strawberry Commission (OSC) will partner with Peerbolt Crop Management (PCM) to create two workshops introducing Oregon growers to the fresh strawberry market. The workshops will include grower panelists who currently grow or want to transition to fresh strawberries. Other speakers will discuss fresh market strawberry varieties, where to obtain plants, the differences between process and fresh production, harvest methods, and the importance of food safety. Buyers will speak at the workshops and be available to meet with growers. A fresh strawberry enterprise budget will be created and made available to growers for their use in decision making. Additionally, web resources will be developed to support the growth of Oregon's fresh strawberry production, including useful contacts and information presented at the workshops.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$27,693

ORGANIZATION: Organic Seed Alliance

PROJECT TITLE: Expanding access to specialty produce in the NW through variety trials and market introduction of overwintering and storage crops.

ABSTRACT: There is a high demand for year round availability of locally grown specialty vegetable crops in Oregon and Washington. The two states also hold similar climatic and agronomic challenges as well as highly sophisticated produce buyers that demand superior culinary qualities. Four key crops have been identified by stakeholders as prime opportunities for expanding year round production in OR and WA - overwintering chicories, overwintering sprouting broccoli, winter cabbage, and storage onions. The project will 1) evaluate and promote the agronomic and culinary qualities of these four priority crops, 2) develop markets for these crops by convening tasting/networking events and providing promotional marketing materials and 3) facilitating access to seed of appropriate varieties. Market introduction of these crops will provide farmers with increased sales during winter and early spring when income is normally low, and chefs, retailers, and consumers with expanded access to locally grown food. This project builds off project partner's Northern Organic Vegetable Improvement Collaborative (NOVIC) and Organic Broccoli and Onion Trials (OBOT), two networks of breeders and farmers developing crops for the northern tier and NW region of the US. This project addresses the funding priorities of developing organic and sustainable production practices and developing domestic markets.

FUNDING LEVEL: Total: \$99,319 (Washington: \$64, 246; Oregon: \$35,073)

ORGANIZATION: Pear Bureau NW

PROJECT TITLE: USA Road Show in China

ABSTRACT: 2013 will be the first full season of market access to China, where consumers are more familiar with crisp, Asian pear varieties. To introduce USA Pears as a new item in the produce department, the USA Pear Road Show will serve as a mobile classroom, bringing education to shoppers at supermarkets and hypermarkets, as well as schools in select major cities.

The outfitted truck will unfold in the parking lot, where consumers can come in before they enter the store to learn about the varieties, origin, versatility in recipes, and nutritional benefits of pears. The Pear Bureau will target all supermarket shoppers as well as children with the Road Show, both of which are key demographic targets for the Pear Bureau in China. In order to maximize the impact of the activity, the Pear Bureau will also conduct in-store promotions inside the stores at the pear display, a second opportunity to encourage purchase. This multi-state Road Show project funded by Oregon and Washington will generate excitement and attention for the new product among retailers, consumers, and the media. The Pear Bureau will also use the activity to generate media coverage to reach a broader audience in this new market.

FUNDING LEVEL: Total: \$200,000 (Oregon \$100,000, Washington \$100,000)

ORGANIZATION: Rogue Farm Corps

PROJECT TITLE: Farms Next: Education & Training for the Next Generation of Oregon Farmers

ABSTRACT: The average age of Oregon farmers is nearing sixty. Oregon continues to lose farms and farmland at an alarming rate. At the same time, a boom in consumer interest for locally grown food is opening new opportunities for economic success.

As the face of agriculture shifts, a comprehensive plan to provide quality on-farm training is essential to prepare the next generation of Oregon farmers. Rogue Farm Corps Farms Next program will deliver innovative and effective hands-on training, educational programming and business development support to the next generation of Oregon's specialty crop farmers. Through a combination of direct mentoring, classroom learning, independent study and farm tours, students will gain needed experience, skills and tools to launch successful specialty crop enterprises and farm businesses.

Expanding *Farms Next* beyond the Rogue Valley will open new opportunities for aspiring farmers to learn from and train with mentors from across Oregon's diverse agricultural landscape. Developing phase two of *Farms Next* will offer needed next step opportunities for aspiring farmers and aid in the transition from student to successful business owner.

Successful completion of *Farms Next* expansion and phase two development will increase the number of successful specialty crop enterprises in Oregon.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$90,339

ORGANIZATION: Salem-Keizer Education Foundation

PROJECT TITLE: Garden-to-Career inspires and trains future growers and producers.

ABSTRACT: The US Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that farming and ranching opportunities will decline slightly by 2020 while opportunities in food sciences will grow 10%. The growth is fueled by interest in sustainability, food safety and value-added specialty foods. Here in the fertile Willamette Valley, where agriculture is the largest employer, the future will rely on professionals with the training and education to stay ahead of this curve.

Building on our successful school gardens program that produces several thousand pounds of fresh food each year, the Salem-Keizer Education Foundation's Garden-to-Career program will nurture students' interest in academic and career paths related to specialty-crop agriculture. The program brings students together with growers, producers, entrepreneurs, researchers, professors, and advocates. Through tours, presentations, job-shadowing, mentoring and internships, students will learn directly from industry leaders. To help sustain this kind of learning experience into future decades, the program also brings university students into school garden internships where they gain experience in delivering school-based garden curriculum.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$93,900

ORGANIZATION: Oregon Department of Agriculture, Market Access and Certification Program Area

PROJECT TITLE: Celebrate Oregon Agriculture! Digging Deeper into “Core Nutrition Messages” and Exploring Sponsored Content

ABSTRACT: Celebrate Oregon Agriculture! Phase III builds on a previously successful multi-platform television, print and online campaign designed to motivate parents and caregivers of school-aged children to purchase, prepare and consume Oregon specialty crops. Building on what we have learned over the past 12 months, Phase III of this promotion will be distinct in two ways. First, we will produce up to four, four-minute segments that will featured specialty crops to bring to life one of the “five core nutrition messages” USDA’s Food Nutrition Services of messages has identified as messages that are more likely to influence parents’ purchasing and serving of fruits vegetables. Second, Phase III promotional activities will add depth and breadth to the video content by exploring “sponsored content.” Sponsored content will be hosted on KATU.com website and include weekly articles on featured specialty crops, banner ads, and sponsored content articles that rotate on the KATU.com homepage widget. All media impressions will increase the awareness of consumers on how specialty crops are produced, the virtues of the products, where to purchase them, how to use them, and how to engage youth in the process.

FUNDING LEVEL: \$28,102