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Department of  
Natural Resources

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STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

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## **Alaskans can apply for federal specialty crop block grants**

**(Palmer, AK)** – Alaskans can apply for block grants of up to \$60,000 to support Alaska-grown specialty crops, under a federal program administered by the Alaska Division of Agriculture.

The grants will be available in two categories: smaller grants (up to \$25,000) target entry-level or investigative projects, and larger grants (up to \$60,000) are aimed at more evidence-based research projects, or those building on previous projects with strong industry support.

Grant applicants must provide a letter of intent to the division by 5 p.m. on March 22, 2021. The request for proposals, including application and deadline information, is at: [http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/Grants/SCBG\\_LOI\\_2021.docx](http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/Grants/SCBG_LOI_2021.docx)

The grant program seeks to enhance Alaska's specialty crops' competitiveness, sustain farmers' livelihoods, and strengthen local communities. Only projects related to specialty crops are eligible. Potential recipients might include universities, extension services, soil and water conservation districts, or schools working with a business or non-profit.

For more information on the grants, including the dates and times of two informational sessions the division will host, go to: [http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag\\_grants.htm](http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_grants.htm).

The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines specialty crops as fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and horticulture, and nursery crops. Many Alaska Grown products – including livestock, dairy, fuel/feed grains, and hay – are now classified as specialty crops. While kelp and seaweed also meet the USDA specialty crop definition, federal restrictions exclude other aquaculture products from the grant program. A list of USDA-eligible specialty crops is available at:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp/specialty-crop>.

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