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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 specialty crops under a federal program administered by the Alaska Division of Agriculture.

The grants will be available in two categories, with smaller grants targeting entry-level or investigative projects, and larger grants 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 Feb. 11. The request for proposals, including application and deadline information, is at: <http://buyalaskagrown.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2019-SCCG-RFP.pdf>.

Two teleconferences will be held to answer questions from potential applicants; the first on Jan. 16 from 10-11 a.m. and the second on Jan. 23 from 2-3 p.m. To participate, call: 1-800-315-6338, and enter the access code 7613870#.

The grant program seeks to enhance the competitiveness of Alaska Grown specialty crops, sustain farmers' livelihoods, and strengthen local communities. Only projects related to specialty crops are allowed under this funding source. Potential recipients might include universities, extension services, soil and water conservation districts, or schools working with in cooperation with a business or non-profit.

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, hay, and aquaculture – are excluded from the grant program, due to USDA restrictions. A list of USDA-eligible specialty crops is at: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp/specialty-crop>

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