

Specialty Crop Block Grant

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) is now accepting applications for the 2018 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Projects funded through this program must solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops and cannot benefit one particular commercial product or provide a profit to a single organization, institution, or individual. Specialty crops include commonly recognized fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and nursery crops (including floriculture). The deadline to apply to MDAC is April 10, 2018.

[Request for Proposals](#)

[Application Template](#)

[More Information](#)

Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP)

LFPP offers grant funds with a 25% match to support the development and expansion of local and regional food business enterprises to increase domestic consumption of, and access to, locally and regionally produced agricultural products, and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets. The deadline to apply to USDA is May 7, 2018.

[Learn More](#)

Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)

The goals of FMPP grants are to increase domestic consumption of, and access to, locally and regionally produced agricultural products, and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets by developing, improving, expanding, and providing outreach, training, and technical assistance to, or assisting in the development, improvement, and expansion of, domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. The deadline to apply to USDA is May 7, 2018.

[Learn More](#)

Alliance of Sustainable Farms-Farmer-To-Farmer Mentoring Program

The Alliance Farmer-to-Farmer Mentoring Program pairs experienced farmers with current and aspiring farmers to provide one-to-one exchanges and on-farm learning opportunities. Mentors share practical information on best practices, appropriate technologies, and day-to-day activities on the farm. Mentors are experienced farmers and ranchers who have a commitment to sustainable agriculture and a willingness to help others. Mentees can be current or aspiring farmers or ranchers with a proven commitment

and passion for agriculture. This pilot program targets and encourages mentee participation from: socially-disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and veteran farmers and ranchers. "Mentoring draws on real-life to answer practical questions".

[Overview of the Program Application](#)

Preparing for a Food Safety Audit Video

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce is proud to release this informational video for farmers that may be required to obtain a food safety audit such as GAP/GHP or comply with the new Food Safety Modernization Act-Produce Safety Rule (FSMA-PSR). If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the DVD, please call or email at [601-359-1196](tel:601-359-1196) or susan@mdac.ms.gov.

[Video Link](#)

Growing Lunch School Garden Grant

Growing Lunch is a school garden grant program administered through the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce with the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Growing Lunch seeks to enhance Farm to School efforts across the state. It acts as an educational tool to enhance the knowledge of daycare and school-aged children on agriculture, healthy eating and how food arrives on their plate three times a day. All schools, K-12, and daycares/pre-schools in the State of Mississippi are eligible to apply. Schools that already have a school garden may apply to further their production. It is encouraged that schools applying have local support, for example, a local extension office or Master Gardeners. This program is on a first come, first serve basis. Only one grant can be awarded per school. Schools must fill out the application and have a dedicated coordinator. Pre-schools must be registered/licensed by the Mississippi Department of Health. Schools that have received a Growing Lunch grant from MDAC in the past are not eligible to apply for more funds at this time.

[Link to Additional Resource](#)

GAP/GHP Cost-Share Program

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce is currently offering a cost-share program to provide financial assistance to Mississippi fruit and vegetable farmers receiving Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP) Certification. Eligible farmers will receive reimbursement for 75% of the certification costs up to a maximum of \$500.

[Link to Additional Resource](#)