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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ADDITIONAL FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR 2021 SPECIALTY CROP GRANTS,
PROPOSALS DUE JULY 31**

LINCOLN—The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) is again seeking grant proposals for projects under the Special Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP). Additional SCBGP funds in the amount of approximately \$660,000 are being made available through H.R. 133, a government funding bill which includes economic stimulus provisions due to COVID-19 impacts to the food system. NDA will award grants to projects that enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops in Nebraska (i.e. fruits, vegetables, nuts, honey) through a competitive solicitation and selection process. SCBGP is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered by NDA. The deadline for submitting grant proposals to NDA is July 31, 2021.

“The coronavirus pandemic taught us many things including the importance of a stable and diversified food chain, and specialty crops are a vital part of that process,” said NDA Director Steve Wellman. “Specialty crops add value and variety to Nebraska agriculture. These extra funds will support projects to help producers and consumers alike.”

The 2021 proposals will be reviewed and scored using select criteria. Producers, organizations and associations, as well as state and local agencies, educational groups and other specialty crops stakeholders are eligible to apply. Applicants who make it through the first round will be asked to submit additional information. With this new round of funding, grant funds cannot be expended before Sept. 30, 2021, or after Sept. 29, 2024. NDA and USDA will announce the projects that will receive funding later this year.

Instructions for submitting a proposal, proposal applications, performance measures and program guidelines are available on NDA’s website at <https://nda.nebraska.gov/promotion/scbgp/index.html>. All proposals should be saved as a Microsoft Word.docx file and sent electronically to casey.foster@nebraska.gov by July 31. For additional information, contact SCBG Program Manager Casey Foster at 402-471-4876, or by the email listed above.

To view a comprehensive list of eligible specialty crops and examples of projects funded under the SCBGP, visit USDA’s website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp>.

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