

SCBGP FY21
Frequently Asked Questions
As of 1/21/2021 -- Check back for updates.

Eligibility / Eligible Projects

Q: Can I submit a proposal if my status with Hawaii Compliance Express (HCE) is showing “not compliant”?

A: Yes. However, when proposals are reviewed, only proposals with HCE status of “compliant” will be eligible for an award or if SPO Form 80 has been completed (<https://spo.hawaii.gov/all-forms/>).

Q: Can I submit a proposal with a budget over \$40,000?

A: Yes. Proposals with budgets of higher amounts will be considered for projects of extraordinary statewide benefit or exceptional merit and benefit to the specialty crop industry.

Q: My project will take longer than 24 months – will this disqualify my application?

A: Yes. The time of performance for all proposals will be 24 months maximum and by June 30, 2024. If selected for an award, a no-cost time of performance extension will be considered for projects whose time of performance is no longer than 24 months and will be completed by June 30, 2024.

Q: If my proposal is submitted before the deadline of noon, Friday, February 12, 2021, can I submit supporting documents such as Letters of Support after the deadline?

A: No. Documents received after the deadline shall not be processed by staff or reviewed by the evaluation committee.

Q: Since honey is a specialty crop, are bees eligible as a specialty crop?

A: Yes. Projects that enhance the competitiveness of bees are eligible.

Q: Is limu or algae included as specialty crops?

A: Seaweed/kelp/limu/algae can be considered eligible so long as it is managed and used by humans.

Q: My project was funded by the SCBGP and is ongoing. Am I eligible to submit another proposal?

A: Yes. The FY21 proposal should not rely on results or be a continuation of results from a project that is ongoing as that may impact the success of the FY21 project. Proposals should have objectives, outcomes, indicators and data collection sections that are unique.

Q: Can attending conferences be covered (with SCBGP funds) ?

*A: If the activity and/or expenditure enhances the competitiveness of the specialty crop, yes. There could be discussion in the budget narrative describing how the conference will be part of **data collection**, for example, that will provide the numbers for an **indicator** that will support the **outcome** that will achieve the **objective** that meets the **purpose**.*

If the activity and/or expenditure does not enhance the competitiveness of the specialty crop, no.

Q: Can we apply for grant funding to support infrastructure needs to support the crop including by not limited to infrastructure associated with waste water recycling systems that would irrigate the crops with recycled/treated wastewater from the property. A secondary goal of the project is to demonstrate safe and reliable strategies to address wastewater recycling for non-edible crops that can help conserve

potable water demands for the State of Hawaii. There are currently over 90,000 cesspools in Hawaii that are polluting our ground water and shorelines and need alternative solutions. In addition, potable water conservation is a big issue for the State moving forward.

A: All eligible applicants – refer to page 4, II. Eligible Applicants -- can apply for grant funding. The purpose of the SCBGP is to enhance the competitiveness of the specialty crop. Review the Outcomes and Indicators on page 28 of the RFP to determine which Outcome and associated Indicator would support the Purpose and Objective(s) of the proposal and what/how the data collection would be conducted to get the numbers for the indicators that support the outcomes that achieve the objectives.

Q: Would cultivating the A'e Tree (Hawaiian Soap Nut) qualify under the program definition of "specialty crop"?

The SCBGP definition of a specialty crop is found on page 3 of the RFP – the answer to your question can be either yes or no, based on whether the A'e Tree proposal meets the definition. If yes, please show how the crop meets the eligibility as defined below and how the project enhances the competitiveness of the specialty crop.

funds. The Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 defines specialty crops as “fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture).” Eligible plants must be cultivated or managed and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification to be considered specialty crops. Processed products shall consist of greater than 50% of the specialty crop by weight, exclusive of added water. <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp/specialty-crop> (see Appendix E for a list of specialty crops).

Q: (1) Can we apply for grant funding to support infrastructure needs to support the crop including but not limited to: rain catchment roof surface and/or structure, water catchment plumbing distribution systems and pumps etc. to support irrigation?

Q: (2) Can we apply for grant funding to support infrastructure needs to support the crop including a processing area, tools storage shed etc.?

Q: (3) Can we apply for grant funding to support infrastructure needs to support the crop including solar PV panels to power the pumps and water treatment/distribution systems and any support lighting.

A: (1) (2) (3) No. Refer to page 12, VII. Restrictions and Limitations on SCBGP Grant Funds

- Capital expenditures for general purpose equipment, buildings, and land are unallowable as direct charges.

Capital expenditures means expenditures for the acquisition of capital assets (equipment, buildings, land), or expenditures to make improvements to capital assets that materially increase their value or useful life. Acquisition cost means the cost of the asset including the cost to put it in place.

Acquisition cost for equipment, for example, means the net invoice price of the equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation may be included in, or excluded from the acquisition cost in accordance with the governmental unit's regular accounting practices.

Application – recommendation to review all parts of the RFP

Q: Do I have to submit my proposal on the SCBGP Project Template provided?

A: Yes.

Q: Are Letters of Support (LOS) required?

A: No. However, if a partner or beneficiary has a role in the project, a LOS from that partner/beneficiary showing their commitment to the project would strengthen the proposal.

Q: How many objectives, outcomes and indicators should be selected?

A: The number of objectives depends on the purpose of the project and should be concise. Achieving the objective is the reason for the project and four **or less** objectives is preferred. There should be at least one Outcome and one Indicator for each Objective that support achieving the objective. **The data collection to report on each of the outcomes and indicators must be described in detail in the data collection section of the template.**

Q: I'm in Molokai where there are very few options for many things, so we have been focusing on our island market. To make a project have statewide benefit, is media/multimedia marketing enough?

A: Will not speak to "enough" as that is to be determined from the proposal. To make a project that has statewide benefit, making the information that is funded by the project widely available is the goal. Should you have a workshop, to record it and post on YouTube would be one option.

An example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3IKdWZdUfko> – this project was funded by SCBGP FY17 and posted June 2019 as a deliverable in the final report.

Or <http://www.hawaiiineotropica.com/about/blog/100-wedding-celebrations-2020-webinar.html>

Q: Does it look better for our proposal to have a strategy to make more income from our project? Or is benefiting agriculture enough?

A: Will not speak to "enough" as that is to be determined from the proposal. The project should enhance the competitiveness of the specialty crop. If income, reinvested into the project, achieves that purpose, then it will strengthen the proposal. The Selection and Scoring Criteria are listed in VIII., page 14 of the RFP. Note that income is not included as a criterion.

Q: Is algae appropriate? Are there only specific uses?

A: If algae is the specialty crop to be enhanced, there are specific guidelines to be eligible for consideration under the SCBGP FY21 RFP. Found on Page 3 of the RFP and copied below:

"Eligible plants must be cultivated or managed and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification to be considered specialty crops. Processed products shall consist of greater than 50% of the specialty crop by weight, exclusive of added water."

Q: Will we get a confirmation email when we submit to HDOA?

A: Yes – applications submitted to hdoa.addrfp@hawaii.gov will be acknowledged.

Q: May I resubmit our September 2020 letters of support (LOS) again or do I need to request new ones?

A: Consider whether new LOS would strengthen the proposal.

Priority Areas:

Q: What are the priority areas to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops?

A: Refer to Page 4 of the RFP for the list that has been copied below:

To be eligible for an award, the project(s) must enhance the competitiveness of Hawaii specialty crops in either domestic or foreign markets. Project areas may include, but are not limited to, the following issues affecting the specialty crop industry:

- *Increasing the production of specialty crops to replace specialty crops that are imported*
- *Increasing child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops.*
- *Sustainability (for this solicitation, sustainable agriculture is the production of specialty crops using farming techniques that protect the environment, public health, and human communities)*
- *Enhancing food safety*
- *Developing new and improved seed varieties*
- *Improving efficiency and reducing costs of distribution systems*
- *Assisting all entities in the specialty crop distribution chain in developing “Good Agricultural Practices”, “Good Handling Practices”, “Good Manufacturing Practices”, and in cost-share arrangements for funding audits of such systems for small farmers, packers and processors.*

Budget:

Q: What if we have budget items that do not “fit” into one of the categories in the budget table?

A: Review Pages 7 – 9 for the instructions; if your item does not fit into one of the categories, include the expense in the Other category and explain how the expense is part of the project.

Q: The RFP says matching funds are not required and yet there is a table for matching funds. Are matching funds required?

A: Cash and/or In-kind contributions, while not required, are encouraged.

Q: Page 34 of the RFP says R/T airfare should be estimated at \$200. Presenter just said \$250 per trip. Which amount should be used?

A: Good catch! Just compared Kayak, Priceline and Hawaiian Airlines websites – which is what the USDA reviewer is likely to do – and the fares are in the \$200 round trip range for coach. Please use \$200 round trip for the proposals submitted in response to the SCBGP FY21 RFP.

If the trip is to a remote airport, say Hana, Maui – can justify a higher round trip with quotes from verifiable websites.

Q: Can supplies be purchased as used? For example, a truck or tractor.

A: Used supplies are allowable. Refer to page 8 of the RFP for discussion of General-Purpose Equipment which is Unallowable under the SCBGP FY21. Page 12 has more discussion of General-Purpose Equipment. Renting or leasing is allowable.

May be useful to review the sections referring to Special Purpose Equipment, which is allowable.

Other:

Q: Do you have a recommended insurance group for agricultural businesses?

Do you need insurance only for the automobile?

A: No, we do not have a recommendation. Please refer to pages 10 and 11 for the guidelines for insurance for contractors whose proposals have been selected for funding.

Q: Is any insurance required if the plan is to cultivate the crop on my own private residential land?

A: Yes. Should your proposal be selected for an award, as all contractors conducting business with the state are required to have insurance. Refer to pages 9, 10 and 11 of the RFP.