



**OREGON
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE**

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program 2020 Summaries of Approved Projects

As prepared by
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Summary of the 2020 Approved Projects

Prepared by the
Oregon Department of Agriculture
Market Access and Certification Programs
Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

1. Oregon Department of Agriculture – Plant Health

Name of Applicant Organization: Oregon Department of Agriculture – Plant Health

Project Title: Enhancing Specialty Seed Production in Oregon through Outreach and Education

Amount Granted: \$124,214

Total Project Amount: \$217,348.16

Project Summary:

Specialty seed and grass seed crops are significant contributors to the economy – in 2018, grass seed was the number four Oregon agricultural commodity, valued at ~\$517 million. Industry members are invested in keeping the industry sustainable, healthy, and in regulatory compliance. This project is a collaboration between stakeholder groups and the Seed Regulatory Program. The goal of this project is to increase industry awareness and compliance with regulations related to seed production, sale, and export. The project partners, including the Oregon Seed Association, Oregon Seed Council, and Willamette Valley Specialty Seed Association, will develop relevant educational materials concerning seed laws, record-keeping and labeling requirements, and diseases of concern that may impact export markets. These materials will be targeted toward industry stakeholders as well as new and beginning farmers. The project will utilize multiple outreach delivery methods, including print, electronic (ie., email, social media), workshops, and presentations, leveraging the unique and diverse influence and reach of each project partner. This will enable the project to effectively impact a diverse and significant group. The outcome of this project will be enhanced competitiveness of Oregon seed crops through increased understanding of and compliance with rules governing the production, sale, and export of seed.

2. Oregon Department of Agriculture – Market Access

Name of Applicant Organization: Oregon Department of Agriculture – Market Access

Project Title: Oregon Small Food & Beverage Business Alignment Project

Amount Granted: \$103,112

Total Project Amount: \$228,499

Project Summary:

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) will provide resources for small to mid-sized food and beverage companies, which use Oregon’s array of specialty crops, seeking opportunities to grow their business. The goal of this project is to assist a minimum of 250 companies over the course of three years, by providing resources including an easy to use digital and print roadmap or guide, provide opportunities for business continued education and provide a platform for buyer/seller connections.

3. Friends of Zenger Farms

Name of Applicant Organization: Friends of Zenger Farms

Project Title: Oregon Food as Medicine: Expanding the Market for Vegetable CSAs

Grant Request: \$166,073

Total Project Amount: \$399,228

Project Summary:

Friends of Zenger Farm and multiple healthcare partners will collaborate to expand the local farm-direct market for vegetable Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) produce purchased through Medicaid prescriptions. During the grant period we will connect Oregon specialty crop vegetable farmers to new low-income consumers through community health centers. We anticipate increasing adult and child consumption of Oregon specialty crops by educating Oregon farmers to ensure they are equipped to access this emerging market.

4. Gorge Grown Food Network

Name of Applicant Organization: Gorge Grown Food Network

Project Title: Gorge Grown Mobile Market: Increasing Access to Specialty Crops in the Columbia Gorge

Grant Request: \$66,000

Total Project Amount: \$267,416

Project Summary:

Gorge Grown Mobile Market: Increasing Access to Specialty Crops in the Columbia Gorge: Gorge Grown Food Network will increase the marketing and distribution of specialty crops in five counties and on the Warm Springs Reservation, using the Gorge Grown Mobile Market, our local produce aggregation and distribution system. The goal is to increase sales channels for specialty crop farmers and simultaneously increase access to fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables in rural and under-resourced communities in the region. Project objectives include:

1. **Improve access** to affordable, healthy foods in low-income, rural areas through the addition of 4 Mobile Market stops in 4 new communities and 2 corner stores.
2. **Increase economic viability** for local specialty crop producers by expanding Mobile Market to support shoulder and winter specialty crop production resulting in increasing sales through the Mobile Market 200% and by \$35,000 per year.

We plan to achieve these objectives by increasing marketing of specialty crop products, hosting educational events alongside market stops, and increasing the number of communities served through the Gorge Grown Mobile Market.

5. Growing Garden

Name of Applicant Organization: Growing Gardens

Project Title: Gardening for Justice: Building sustainable vegetables gardens in correctional facilities in Oregon

Grant Request: \$95,566

Total Project Amount: \$166,679

Project Summary:

Growing Gardens will enhance consumption of, and access to, specialty crops, vegetables, and herbs among the adult and juvenile inmates in 16 correctional institutions across the State of Oregon. Our program provides inmates the opportunity to gain hands-on gardening experience by growing a significant portion of their own food (228,029 lbs. in 2019) as well as participating in horticultural classes; our classes provide inmates with job credentials and the opportunity to develop new social

and vocational skills, which in turn prepares them for successful reentry and participation in the horticultural industries.

This grant will help us to expand the breadth of our offerings, as well as to start a pilot program based on the “popular education” model, or what is known as training the trainer, so that inmates can become instructors and provide horticulture training to other inmates, thereby expanding the horticultural knowledge base inside of the prisons as inmates gain more experiential, technical, and teaching skills for a successful reentry into society and the horticulture industry.

With the additional capacity, we could also begin working with the Oregon Nursery Association to develop a directory of businesses interested in hiring people with a felony record and horticulture training

6. Oregon Blueberry Commission

Name of Applicant Organization: Oregon Blueberry Commission

Project Title: Oregon Blueberry Retail and Foodservice Promotions in Southeast Asia.

Grant Request: \$175,000

Total Project Amount: \$208,273

Project Summary:

The Oregon Blueberry Commission (OBC) will conduct retail and foodservice promotions in Vietnam, Philippines, and Singapore. Since its recent market opening to Oregon fresh blueberries, Vietnam is poised to become the Oregon blueberry industry’s largest Asian customer. In the Philippines, a market access agreement is expected to be finalized by mid-2020 which will permit the entry of fresh blueberries from Oregon for the first time to that country. OBC plans to use the information learned with past successes (in Singapore and Vietnam), to structure in-market promotional efforts in order to grow consumer awareness and sales of Oregon blueberries in the Philippines, and to continue developing OBC’s efforts in Vietnam and Singapore.

The promotional strategy will include retail promotions with point of sale materials, advertising, and retail demos that will promote the origin of Oregon blueberries among trade partners who carry the product. Promotions may also be extended to cover processed products in the market that incorporate Oregon blueberries as an ingredient.

7. Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network

Name of Applicant Organization: Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network

Project Title: Increasing Oregon-Grown Fruits and Vegetables in the School Marketplace

Grant Request: \$92,043

Total Project Amount: \$102,844

Project Summary:

The Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network (OFSSGN) and partners will increase purchases of Oregon-grown fruits and vegetables by Oregon schools (PreK-12) by 1) expanding and promoting a searchable online directory where Oregon schools can find fruit and vegetable producers who are ready to sell to schools; and 2) supporting interested producers in becoming school ready.

8. Oregon Processed Vegetable Commission

Name of Applicant Organization: Oregon Processed Vegetable Commission

Project Title: Market Research and Crop Development to Reinvigorate Oregon's Vegetable Industry

Grant Request: \$175,000

Total Project Amount: \$214,914

Project Summary:

The Oregon Processed Vegetable Commission, in cooperation with vegetable producers, processors, Oregon State University, and Campbeltown Consulting will assess new market opportunities for processed vegetables and rotational crops, and develop crop production practices that will ensure a sustainable future for the processed vegetable industry in Willamette Valley.

9. Oregon Raspberry & Blackberry Commission

Name of Applicant Organization: Oregon Raspberry & Blackberry Commission

Project Title: Market Development for Processed Oregon Caneberries and Strawberries in Japan

Amount Granted: \$122,834

Total Project Amount: \$231,187

Project Summary:

The Oregon Raspberry and Blackberry Commission (ORBC) will leverage new Oregon blackberry nutrient data to further expand market development and access for Northwest Berries to Japan through a comprehensive marketing program connecting directly with product manufacturers, Japanese and Oregon based chefs, and retail companies before, during, and after FOODEX, Japan's largest exhibition dedicated to food and drink.

FOODEX Japan will be held in March 2021. ORBC participation at this food industry trade show, and additional program elements will provide product exposure, enhance the competitiveness of processed Oregon berries in Japan and achieve the following objectives:

- attracting new buyers and increasing sales of frozen, canned and freeze-dried Oregon berries in Japan
- increasing buyer awareness of Oregon berries as a premium, healthy, functional, and nutritious food and food ingredient

Building from past interactions with the Japanese marketplace through another SCBGP, the Oregon berry industry needs to demonstrate improvement in available nutrient information. As such, this project will begin with comprehensive nutrient testing of frozen Oregon blackberries. Pre-FOODEX preparation will also include Japanese Marketplace Training for all interested industry packers to prepare for success in the Japanese business environment. The ORBC will then exhibit at the 4-day FOODEX trade show, host a culinary demonstration, lead a product development workshop, sample product to potential buyers, conduct pre/post event publicity and influencer outreach, and follow up with leads at regular intervals for the remainder of 2021. These activities will directly support export market development of Oregon berries to Japan.

10. Oregon State University – Jeliakov

Name of Applicant Organization: Oregon State University - Jeliakov

Project Title: Development of sprout inhibitors or growth suppressants in potatoes

Grant Request: \$93,335

Total Project Amount: \$149,967

Project Summary:

The Oregon State University will develop new products for sprout inhibition or suppression in potato. The first step is to screen and identify natural products as sprout inhibitors or growth

suppressants in potatoes to be implemented in potato storage. The project participants will disseminate results through factsheet, through grower meetings and field days, website, webinar and article to be posted at eOrganic (<https://eorganic.info/>) and publications in scientific journals. The implementation of the expected results will have significant positive impact on the potato industry, may help with overcoming the limitations of chemical inhibitors, and foster expanding markets for OR potato across the nation and internationally. We will be screening more than 120 essential oils and oil blends (some from our research program with unique chemical and biological characteristics) as sprout inhibitors. We expect to identify oils or oil fractions or blends that would have potential as substitute /alternative to the currently utilized synthetic chemicals. The adoption of new essential oil-based products in potato storage is expected to improve access to additional market segments, thus enhancing the marketability, economic returns, and safety of OR potato. In addition, essential oil based products in potato storage and transportation could reduce exposure of workers to chemical pesticides, provide cleaner and safer products to consumers, and hence, contribute to improved human health.

11. Oregon State University – Lightle

Name of Applicant Organization: Oregon State University – Lightle

Project Title: Integrated Control of Cabbage Maggot in Vegetable and Seed Crops

Grant Request: \$165,870

Total Project Amount: \$206,981

Project Summary:

Oregon State University, North Willamette Research and Extension Center (NWREC) will investigate innovative control strategies to limit stand loss and harvest damage from cabbage maggot in Oregon *Brassica* vegetables and vegetable seed crops. In 2019, specialty seed growers estimated crop loss to cabbage maggot at 10%, and a survey of fresh market vegetable producers ranks cabbage maggot as the most difficult insect pest to control with current intensive pesticide management practices. One current control strategy is planting only within periods of low insect activity, which limits market access and represents an opportunity cost to producers. Another common option is chemical controls, which carry material and application costs and environmental risks, yet provide only questionable efficacy. We will test new ideas for insect control, including both organic and conventional options, which target multiple stages of the insect lifecycle (larvae, pupae and adults) to provide growers with tools to design an effective integrated pest management (IPM) program that is compatible with their operation.

Strategies to be tested include entomopathogenic fungi for control of larvae and overwintering pupae, trap crops and baited feeding formulations targeted at adults, and improved timing of chemical applications to reduce larval infestation. Growers will be invited to field days held at NWREC to view research plots and discuss implementation of new practices. Results will be disseminated to growers at PNW vegetable grower education meetings, Extension publications, and through online database resources housed at <https://horticulture.oregonstate.edu/oregon-vegetables>.

12. Oregon State University – Philips

Name of Applicant Organization: Oregon State University – Philips

Project Title: Enhancing turfgrass carbon sequestration to improve sustainability and market access.

Grant Request: \$174,984

Total Project Amount: \$219,558

Project Summary:

Oregon State University will evaluate the impacts of turfgrass maintenance practices (nitrogen fertilization, irrigation, mowing height, and mowing frequency) on turfgrass carbon balance and soil carbon accumulation. This project will investigate how to enhance accumulation of soil organic carbon in turfgrass ecosystems. By understanding and potentially reducing the climate footprint of natural turfgrass, this research can provide ways of addressing the regulatory burden imposed by greenhouse gas reduction programs and simultaneously improve market acceptance. Results of this research will be disseminated to turfgrass seed producers, turfgrass managers (golf course superintendents, commercial turf managers, school and park employees), and other users (home owners and master gardener programs) through extension activities including field days, presentations, and written materials.

13. Oregon State University – Rondon

Name of Applicant Organization: Oregon State University – Rondon

Project Title: Seeking Alternatives to Chlorpyrifos: Addressing Needs for Sustainable Insect Management

Grant Request: \$162,794

Total Project Amount: \$174,126

Project Summary:**Organization:** Oregon State University

Potential for restrictions on the use of chlorpyrifos or the complete revocation of its registration by the Oregon Department of Agriculture in Oregon has concerned Oregon growers. It is difficult to estimate the economic impact on the specialty crop industry in Oregon as a result of canceling or further limiting the use of chlorpyrifos, but Oregon specialty crop growers consider that the economic impact would be substantial. Therefore, we seek to initiate a cross-commodity collaborative research project to identify viable options as alternatives to chlorpyrifos; once it is no longer available for use in Oregon. Research will be conducted at several locations to determine the efficacy of currently registered chemistries and newer products in the registration pipeline with diverse mode(s) of action for insect pest management in onion, corn, pears, grass seed, and clover seed. Identification of promising alternatives and knowledge gain of their viability by analyzing the cost-benefit data will be disseminated to the Oregon Department of Agriculture and growers promptly through publications, social media tools, field days and growers' meetings, etc. Information on practical alternatives to chlorpyrifos will help growers to incorporate these products in their integrated pest management plans to enhance the productivity of specialty and other crops of Oregon.

14. Oregon State University – Zhao

Name of Applicant Organization: Oregon State University - Zhao**Project Title:** Converting beverage processing byproducts into high-value sustainable packaging products**Grant Request:** \$172,918**Total Project Amount:** \$259,258**Project Summary:**

The Oregon State University will conduct research and development to convert plant-originated beverage processing waste (byproducts) in the juice, cider, wine, beer, and kombucha industries into value-added and sustainable packaging products (containers and other types). Oregon's beverage industry generates large quantities of fruit/wine grape pomace and brewer's spent grains. The majority of these byproducts are sent to landfills or as composting and low-margin animal feed. However, these byproducts represent an enormous opportunity to create value through sustainable practices by converting them into packaging products with recent technology advances. PI has done noteworthy research for developing

protocols of converting plant-originated, fiber-rich byproducts into green and sustainable packaging materials. For moving bench research into commercial products and transferring technology to industrial implementation, PI in collaboration with industrial partners propose to: 1) optimize developed bench protocols to develop fully biodegradable biocomposites (based materials to make biodegradable packaging products) from specialty crop beverage processing byproducts and study their functionalities; 2) design and build a pilot scale fiber pulp-molding system to make biodegradable package containers and products and evaluate their applications as plant/flora pots and other types of package; and 3) engage industry stakeholders on technology strategies and transfer the findings into an implementation phase. This project will enhance the productivity and innovation of specialty crop producers by developing new prototypes/uses for beverage processing byproducts that leverage existing and emerging industries, enhancing sustainability and environmental stewardship practices through reutilization of byproducts, and benefiting the society by reducing impact of processing waste on the environment.