



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**

CINDY HYDE-SMITH
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Hyde-Smith Announces Availability of Specialty Crop Grant Funds

Jackson, Miss. – Commissioner Cindy Hyde-Smith announced that the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce is now accepting proposals for Mississippi's FY 2013 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. The purpose of the program is to solely enhance the competitiveness of Mississippi's specialty crop industry. Projects funded through the program must address at least one of the following priority areas: research, education/training/technical assistance, promotion/marketing, or food safety/product handling.

“Mississippi's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program provides unlimited opportunities for our specialty crop industry. A wide array of projects and programs that address issues impacting our specialty crop producers have been funded in the past, and I highly encourage eligible entities to take advantage of this funding opportunity by submitting an application,” said Commissioner Cindy Hyde-Smith.

The Specialty Crop Block Grant Program is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture and authorized by the extension of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill). Specialty crops are defined as fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops (including floriculture). Funding will not be awarded to projects that solely benefit a particular commercial product or provide a profit to a single organization, institution, or individual.

To obtain an application, visit www.mdac.ms.gov, call (601) 359-1196, or email susan@mdac.ms.gov. Applications will be accepted until May 6, 2013.

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