

The Honorable Lewis R. Riley

Secretary
Maryland Department of Agriculture
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Base Grant: \$500,000
Specialty Crop Grant: \$500,000
Total Grant: \$1,000,000

Specialty Crop Fund Allocations

The Maryland Department of Agriculture, with the advice of the Specialty Crop Promotion Funds Advisory Committee, has designated funds for the projects listed below from a \$1,000,000 grant from the United States Department of Agriculture. Project coordinators submitted proposals with matching funds as well as follow-up information to meet requests from the committee.

Production, Market Research and Education on Specialty Crops:

Stephan Tubene, The Small Farm Institute, University of Maryland, \$165,000.

Test the potential for growing specific specialty crops in diverse environments found in Maryland; evaluate their market potential in the state; and provide production and marketing guidelines to producers, retailer, wholesalers, and agricultural professionals. Projects are: oriental leafy vegetables; cut flowers; beach plums, table and wine grapes; hybrid bramble; asparagus; strawberry; flowering plants; and specialty and ethnic vegetables research and education. High Tunnel technology, which extends growing seasons, will be studied for brambles and organic salads.

Research and Education to Support Organic Crop Production:

Thomas W. Simpson, Chesapeake Bay Programs and James C. Hanson, University of Maryland, \$70,000.

Establish long-term organic research and demonstration sites at each of the seven University of Maryland Research and Education Centers; evaluate management practices for problematic insect pests in organic crop production; and study phosphorus management in organic production systems.

Ginseng Production:

Marla McIntosh, University of Maryland and Robert Trumbule, Maryland Department of Agriculture, \$80,000.

Investigate and develop ways for Maryland landowners to cultivate native American ginseng for profit in a very strong international niche market without further diminishing wild populations of this endangered species.

Honey Bees: Observation Hive and Cost-Share for Starter Bees:

I. Barton Smith, Maryland Department of Agriculture, \$55,000.

Part I: Purchase observation hives to be used for demonstrations at fairs and for school students. Part II: share the cost of starter bees with beekeepers as a way to promote more beekeeping and to replenish the supply of honey bees, which is at an all-time low in Maryland, and critical to pollination of approximately \$40 million in Maryland crops.

Seminars on Aquaculture and Organics:

Noreen Eberly and Valerie Frances, Maryland Department of Agriculture, \$10,000.

Develop and conduct seminars on marketing and production of organic products and development and operation of aquaculture facilities.

“Maryland-Grown” Plant Promotion:

Gary Mangum, Bell Nurseries, \$100,000.

Promotional advertising campaign to increase consumption of Maryland-grown annuals, perennials, and related garden supplies in the retail consumer marketplace.

“Ask for Maryland Wine” Promotion:

Bert Basignani, Association of Maryland Wineries, \$50,000.

Promote Maryland’s award-winning wines to consumers and retailers to increase market share of Maryland’s winemaking and grape-growing industries.

Continued...

MDA Market Development/Promotion Initiative:

Jane Storrs, Maryland Department of Agriculture, \$370,000.

Enhance the appeal of and access to Maryland agricultural products among consumers, commercial buyers and niche markets through a website designed to provide easy access to buyers of Maryland products; an identification and promotion campaign for quality assurance of Maryland products; research on future assistance which can be provided to producers of value-added products; and development of niche marketing strategies beginning with a farmer-to-chef network.

Maryland Ornamental/Environmental Specialty Crops Promotion:

George Mayo, Maryland Nursery and Landscape Association, \$100,000.

Initiate a long-term sustainable promotional strategy and campaign to improve the demand for and sales of ornamental/environmental plants and services in Maryland.