

**State of Maine
Master Score Sheet**

RFP# 202106095						
HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program						
Bidder Name:		Maine Farmland Trust	Maine Grocers and Food Producers Association	Maine Maple Producers Association	Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association	
Proposed Cost:		\$37,544.93	\$29,800.00	\$36,370.00	\$68,191.40	
Scoring Sections	Points Available					
Application Cover Page	Pass/Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	
Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification	Pass/Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	
Litigation	Pass/Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area.	5	5	2	3	0	
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP	5	5	2	3	5	
The project addressed the issues put forth by USDA as stated in the RFP	25	20	10	2	24	
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.	20	20	7	7	12	
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	12	4	12	12	
Budget is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.	20	20	10	17	17	
TOTAL		<u>100</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>70</u>

RFP# 202106095

HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Bidder Name:		University of Maine – Dr. Annis	University of Maine – Dr. Ginakes	University of Maine – Dr. Moran	Wild Blueberry Commission
Proposed Cost:		\$73,862.00	\$48,058.00	\$12,720	\$84,030
Scoring Sections	Points Available				
Application Cover Page	Pass/Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification	Pass/Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Litigation	Pass/Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area.	5	5	5	5	4
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP	5	4	2	4	5
The project addressed the issues put forth by USDA as stated in the RFP	25	22	10	24	25
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.	20	15	18	20	18
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	12	7	13	12
Budget is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.	30	22	17	27	28
TOTAL	<u>100</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>92</u>

From: [Specialty Crop Block Grant](#)
To: "[Katie Boss](#)"
Subject: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
Date: Wednesday, January 05, 2022 12:45:00 PM
Attachments: [Maine Farmland Trust Letter.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Good afternoon,

Attached is the notice for the 2021 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant RFA #202106095.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine and the Bureau of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources.

Thank you,

Tonya K. Perkins
Office Specialist II
Bureau of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources
Agricultural Resource Development
28 State House Station
90 Blossom Lane
Augusta, ME 04333-0028
Phone: 207-287-3491
Fax: 207-287-7548
www.maine.gov/dacf
www.getrealmaine.com



STATE OF MAINE
Department of Agriculture, Conservation
and Forestry

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner

January 5, 2022

Maine Farmland Trust
Ms. Amy Fisher
97 Main Street
Belfast, Maine 04915

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award(s) under RFA # 202106095,
HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
PROJECT TITLE: Business of Farming: Improving Profitability and Sustainability of Small-Scale
Wild Blueberry Growers

Dear Ms. Fisher:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award(s) to the following bidder(s):

- Maine Farmland Trust: *Business of Farming: Improving Profitability and Sustainability of Small-Scale Wild Blueberry Growers*
- Maine Maple Producers Association: *Enhancing Consumer Education and markets of Pure Maine Maple Syrup*
- Maine organic Farmers and Gardeners' Association: *Maine Soil Health Project*
- University of Maine – Dr. Annis: *New Approaches to Identify and Control Fungal Diseases of Wild Blueberry*
- University of Maine – Dr. Ginakes: *Diversifying Maine Vegetable Farms with Enhanced Celery Production*
- University of Maine – Dr. Moran: *Breeding Cold Hardy Peaches for Maine*
- Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine: *Building Consumer Loyalty for Maine Wild Blueberries Through Agritourism*

The bidder(s) listed above received the evaluation team's highest ranking(s). The Department will be contacting the aforementioned bidder(s) soon to negotiate a contract. As provided in the RFP, the Notice of Conditional Contract Award is subject to execution of a written contract and, as a result, this Notice does NOT constitute the formation of a contract between the Department and the apparent successful vendor. The vendor shall not acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until a contract containing terms and conditions acceptable to

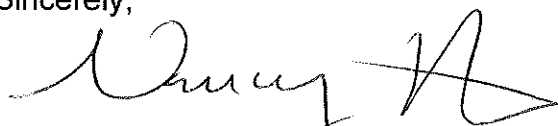
the Department is executed. The Department further reserves the right to cancel this Notice of Conditional Contract Award at any time prior to the execution of a written contract.

As stated in the RFP, following announcement of this award decision, all submissions in response to the RFP are considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA). 1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq.; 5 M.R.S. § 1825-B (6).

This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy McBrady". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "N" and "M".

Nancy McBrady, Director
Bureau, Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

Any person aggrieved by an award decision may request an appeal hearing. The request must be made to the Director of the Bureau of General Services, in writing, within 15 days of notification of the contract award as provided in 5 M.R.S. § 1825-E (2) and the Rules of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services, Division of Purchases, Chapter 120, § (2) (2).

From: [Specialty Crop Block Grant](#)
To: [Christine Cummings](#)
Subject: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
Date: Wednesday, January 05, 2022 12:48:00 PM
Attachments: [Maine Grocers and Food Producers Letter.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Good afternoon,

Attached is the notice for the 2021 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant RFA #202106095.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine and the Bureau of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources.

Thank you,

Tonya K. Perkins
Office Specialist II
Bureau of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources
Agricultural Resource Development
28 State House Station
90 Blossom Lane
Augusta, ME 04333-0028
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STATE OF MAINE
Department of Agriculture, Conservation
and Forestry

Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner

Janet T. Mills
Governor

January 5, 2022

Maine Grocers and Food Producers Association
Ms. Christine Cummings
45 Melvill Street
Augusta, Maine 04330

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award(s) under RFA # 202106095,
HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant

PROJECT TITLE: Consumer attitudes and preferences for Maine specialty crops for market expansion and supply chain efficiencies

Dear Ms. Cummings:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award(s) to the following bidder(s):

- Maine Farmland Trust: *Business of Farming: Improving Profitability and Sustainability of Small-Scale Wild Blueberry Growers*
- Maine Maple Producers Association: *Enhancing Consumer Education and markets of Pure Maine Maple Syrup*
- Maine organic Farmers and Gardeners' Association: *Maine Soil Health Project*
- University of Maine – Dr. Annis: *New Approaches to Identify and Control Fungal Diseases of Wild Blueberry*
- University of Maine – Dr. Ginakes: *Diversifying Maine Vegetable Farms with Enhanced Celery Production*
- University of Maine – Dr. Moran: *Breeding Cold Hardy Peaches for Maine*
- Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine: *Building Consumer Loyalty for Maine Wild Blueberries Through Agritourism*

The bidder(s) listed above received the evaluation team's highest ranking(s). The Department will be contacting the aforementioned bidder(s) soon to negotiate a contract. As provided in the RFP, the Notice of Conditional Contract Award is subject to execution of a written contract and, as a result, this Notice does NOT constitute the formation of a contract between the Department and the apparent successful vendor. The vendor shall not acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until a contract containing terms and conditions acceptable to

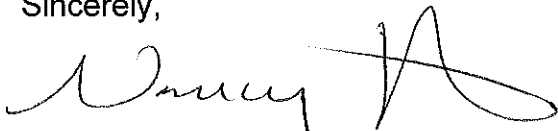
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This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy McBrady". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "N" and "M".

Nancy McBrady, Director
Bureau, Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources

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From: [Specialty Crop Block Grant](#)
To: ["Scott Dunn"](#)
Subject: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
Date: Wednesday, January 05, 2022 12:50:00 PM
Attachments: [Maine Maple Producers Letter.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Good afternoon,

Attached is the notice for the 2021 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant RFA #202106095.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine and the Bureau of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources.

Thank you,

Tonya K. Perkins
Office Specialist II
Bureau of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources
Agricultural Resource Development
28 State House Station
90 Blossom Lane
Augusta, ME 04333-0028
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STATE OF MAINE
Department of Agriculture, Conservation
and Forestry

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner

January 5, 2022

Maine Maple Producers Association
Mr. Scott Dunn
419 Chicopee Road
Buxton, Maine 04093

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award(s) under RFA # 202106095,
HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
PROJECT TITLE: Enhancing Consumer Education and Markets of Pure Maine Maple Syrup

Dear Mr. Dunn:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award(s) to the following bidder(s):

- Maine Farmland Trust: *Business of Farming: Improving Profitability and Sustainability of Small-Scale Wild Blueberry Growers*
- Maine Maple Producers Association: *Enhancing Consumer Education and markets of Pure Maine Maple Syrup*
- Maine organic Farmers and Gardeners' Association: *Maine Soil Health Project*
- University of Maine – Dr. Annis: *New Approaches to Identify and Control Fungal Diseases of Wild Blueberry*
- University of Maine – Dr. Ginakes: *Diversifying Maine Vegetable Farms with Enhanced Celery Production*
- University of Maine – Dr. Moran: *Breeding Cold Hardy Peaches for Maine*
- Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine: *Building Consumer Loyalty for Maine Wild Blueberries Through Agritourism*

The bidder(s) listed above received the evaluation team's highest ranking(s). The Department will be contacting the aforementioned bidder(s) soon to negotiate a contract. As provided in the RFP, the Notice of Conditional Contract Award is subject to execution of a written contract and, as a result, this Notice does NOT constitute the formation of a contract between the Department and the apparent successful vendor. The vendor shall not acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until a contract containing terms and conditions acceptable to

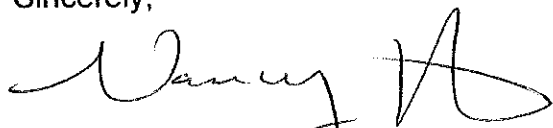
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This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nancy McBrady". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Nancy McBrady, Director
Bureau, Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

Any person aggrieved by an award decision may request an appeal hearing. The request must be made to the Director of the Bureau of General Services, in writing, within 15 days of notification of the contract award as provided in 5 M.R.S. § 1825-E (2) and the Rules of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services, Division of Purchases, Chapter 120, § (2) (2).

From: [Specialty Crop Block Grant](#)
To: [Sarah Alexander](#)
Subject: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
Date: Wednesday, January 05, 2022 12:51:00 PM
Attachments: [Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Letter.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Good afternoon,

Attached is the notice for the 2021 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant RFA #202106095.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine and the Bureau of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources.

Thank you,

Tonya K. Perkins
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STATE OF MAINE
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Janet T. Mills
Governor

Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner

January 5, 2022

Maine Organice Farmers and Gardeners' Association
Ms. Sarah Alexander
PO Box 170
Unity, Maine 04988

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award(s) under RFA # 202106095,
HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
PROJECT TITLE: Maine Soil Health Project

Dear Ms. Alexander:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award(s) to the following bidder(s):

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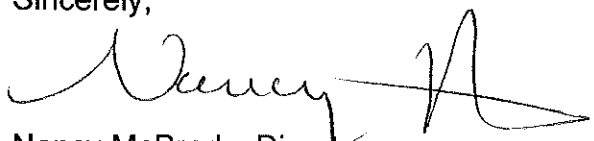
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This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Nancy McBrady, Director
Bureau, Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources

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From: [Specialty Crop Block Grant](#)
To: [Seanna Annis](#)
Cc: umgrants@maine.edu
Subject: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
Date: Wednesday, January 05, 2022 12:52:00 PM
Attachments: [University of Maine - Dr Annis Letter.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Good afternoon,

Attached is the notice for the 2021 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant RFA #202106095.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine and the Bureau of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources.

Thank you,

Tonya K. Perkins
Office Specialist II
Bureau of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources
Agricultural Resource Development
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STATE OF MAINE
Department of Agriculture, Conservation
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Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner

Janet T. Mills
Governor

January 5, 2022

University of Maine
Mr. Christopher Boynton
5717 Corbett Hall
Orono, Maine 04469

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award(s) under RFA # 202106095,
HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
PROJECT TITLE: New approaches to identify and control fungal diseases of wild blueberry (Dr. Annis)

Dear Mr. Boynton:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award(s) to the following bidder(s):

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- University of Maine – Dr. Ginakes: *Diversifying Maine Vegetable Farms with Enhanced Celery Production*
- University of Maine – Dr. Moran: *Breeding Cold Hardy Peaches for Maine*
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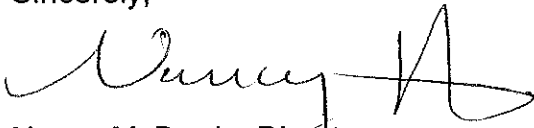
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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

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Nancy McBrady, Director
Bureau, Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources

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From: [Specialty Crop Block Grant](#)
To: peyton.ginakes@maine.edu
Cc: umgrants@maine.edu
Subject: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
Date: Wednesday, January 05, 2022 12:54:00 PM
Attachments: [University of Maine - Dr. Ginakes Letter.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Good afternoon,

Attached is the notice for the 2021 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant RFA #202106095.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine and the Bureau of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources.

Thank you,

Tonya K. Perkins
Office Specialist II
Bureau of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources
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STATE OF MAINE
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January 5, 2022

University of Maine
Mr. Christopher Boynton
5717 Corbett Hall
Orono, Maine 04469

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award(s) under RFA # 202106095,
HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
PROJECT TITLE: Diversifying Maine vegetable farms with enhanced celery production (Dr.
Ginakes)

Dear Mr. Boynton:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award(s) to the following bidder(s):

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the Department is executed. The Department further reserves the right to cancel this Notice of Conditional Contract Award at any time prior to the execution of a written contract.

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

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Nancy McBrady, Director
Bureau, Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

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From: [Specialty Crop Block Grant](#)
To: [Renea Moran](#)
Cc: umgrants@maine.edu
Subject: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
Date: Wednesday, January 05, 2022 12:56:00 PM
Attachments: [University of Maine - Dr Moran Letter.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Good afternoon,

Attached is the notice for the 2021 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant RFA #202106095.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine and the Bureau of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources.

Thank you,

Tonya K. Perkins
Office Specialist II
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STATE OF MAINE
Department of Agriculture, Conservation
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Amanda E. Beal
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January 5, 2022

University of Maine
Mr. Christopher Boynton
5717 Corbett Hall
Orono, Maine 04469

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award(s) under RFA # 202106095,
HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
PROJECT TITLE: Breeding cold Hardy Peaches for Maine (Dr. Moran)

Dear Mr. Boynton:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award(s) to the following bidder(s):

- Maine Farmland Trust: *Business of Farming: Improving Profitability and Sustainability of Small-Scale Wild Blueberry Growers*
- Maine Maple Producers Association: *Enhancing Consumer Education and markets of Pure Maine Maple Syrup*
- Maine organic Farmers and Gardeners' Association: *Maine Soil Health Project*
- University of Maine – Dr. Annis: *New Approaches to Identify and Control Fungal Diseases of Wild Blueberry*
- University of Maine – Dr. Ginakes: *Diversifying Maine Vegetable Farms with Enhanced Celery Production*
- University of Maine – Dr. Moran: *Breeding Cold Hardy Peaches for Maine*
- Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine: *Building Consumer Loyalty for Maine Wild Blueberries Through Agritourism*

The bidder(s) listed above received the evaluation team's highest ranking(s). The Department will be contacting the aforementioned bidder(s) soon to negotiate a contract. As provided in the RFP, the Notice of Conditional Contract Award is subject to execution of a written contract and, as a result, this Notice does NOT constitute the formation of a contract between the Department and the apparent successful vendor. The vendor shall not acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until a contract containing terms and conditions acceptable to

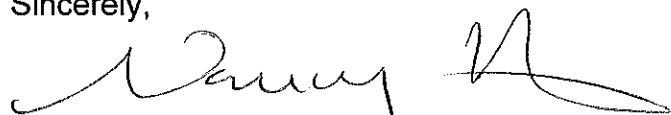
the Department is executed. The Department further reserves the right to cancel this Notice of Conditional Contract Award at any time prior to the execution of a written contract.

As stated in the RFP, following announcement of this award decision, all submissions in response to the RFP are considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA). 1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq.; 5 M.R.S. § 1825-B (6).

This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy M", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Nancy McBrady, Director
Bureau, Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

Any person aggrieved by an award decision may request an appeal hearing. The request must be made to the Director of the Bureau of General Services, in writing, within 15 days of notification of the contract award as provided in 5 M.R.S. § 1825-E (2) and the Rules of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services, Division of Purchases, Chapter 120, § (2) (2).

From: [Specialty Crop Block Grant](#)
To: [Wild Blueberry Commission](#)
Subject: Hr-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
Date: Wednesday, January 05, 2022 12:57:00 PM
Attachments: [Wild Blueberry Commission Letter.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Good afternoon,

Attached is the notice for the 2021 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant RFA #202106095.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine and the Bureau of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources.

Thank you,

Tonya K. Perkins
Office Specialist II
Bureau of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources
Agricultural Resource Development
28 State House Station
90 Blossom Lane
Augusta, ME 04333-0028
Phone: 207-287-3491
Fax: 207-287-7548
www.maine.gov/dacf
www.getrealmaine.com



STATE OF MAINE
Department of Agriculture, Conservation
and Forestry

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner

January 5, 2022

Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine
Mr. Eric Venturini
5784 York Complex Suite 52
Orono, Maine 04469

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award(s) under RFA # 202106095,
HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant
PROJECT TITLE: Building Consumer Loyalty for Maine Wild Blueberries Through Agritourism

Dear Mr. Venturini:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award(s) to the following bidder(s):

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The bidder(s) listed above received the evaluation team's highest ranking(s). The Department will be contacting the aforementioned bidder(s) soon to negotiate a contract. As provided in the RFP, the Notice of Conditional Contract Award is subject to execution of a written contract and, as a result, this Notice does NOT constitute the formation of a contract between the Department and the apparent successful vendor. The vendor shall not acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until a contract containing terms and conditions acceptable to

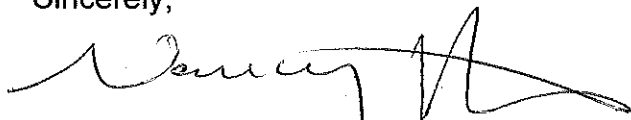
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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy McBrady". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "N" and a long, horizontal stroke extending across the middle of the name.

Nancy McBrady, Director
Bureau, Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

Any person aggrieved by an award decision may request an appeal hearing. The request must be made to the Director of the Bureau of General Services, in writing, within 15 days of notification of the contract award as provided in 5 M.R.S. § 1825-E (2) and the Rules of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services, Division of Purchases, Chapter 120, § (2) (2).

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Maine Farmland Trust
DATE: 9/21/2021

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
 Name of RFP Coordinator: Leigh Hallett
 Names of Evaluators: Ann Gibbs, Joy Bonenfant, Marge Kilkelly

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)		
· Application Cover Page	X	
· Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification	X	
· Litigation	X	
· Executive Summary	X	
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area.	5	5
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP	5	5
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as state in the RFP	25	20
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	20
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	12
Budge is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.	30	20
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>82</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Maine Farmland Trust
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area	5	5

Evaluation Team Comments:

Focuses on small producers. A different type of market development. Will market specialty crops and make them more sustainable - many markets targeted.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlines in the RFP	5	5

Evaluation Team Comments:

Yes it was complete.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as stated in the RFP	25	20

Evaluation Team Comments:

Identified a sustainability strategy.
 Helping small scale, utilizing business planning program.
 Modifying a current program to the wild blueberry producers
 It's an existing program that they are tailoring for a particular group, which might make for a stronger outcome.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	20

Evaluation Team Comments:

Committee discussed what kind of support do the producers receive if someone decides *not* to produce blueberries? Hope this will be addressed.
 Are people being targeted already growing blueberries or are they new to the industry? Will need to clarify that.
 7-9 current growers and 1-2 new growers.
 Clearly demonstrated the outcomes and indicators.
 Identify multiple methods for collecting data. They offer a specific list of what they will collect, including followup after 3 years, for a total of 5 years of data.
 Measurable, clear.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Maine Farmland Trust
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	12

Evaluation Team Comments:

This project only impacts 10 producers, but if they are successful in identifying opportunities, it could have significant impact that could be replicated. Program could be packaged to impact more growers. There are letters of support included.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Budget is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost	30	20

Evaluation Team Comments

They talk about TA for 6 - why not all? Not clear what other TA will be available. Seems vague. Some questions about roles.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Maine Grocers and Food Producers Association
DATE: 9/21/2021

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
 Name of RFP Coordinator: Leigh Hallett
 Names of Evaluators: Ann Gibbs, Joy Bonenfant, Marge Kilkelly

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)		
· Application Cover Page	X	
· Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification	X	
· Litigation	X	
· Executive Summary	X	
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area.	5	2
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP	5	2
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as state in the RFP	25	10
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	7
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	4
Budge is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.	30	10
Total Points	100	35

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Maine Grocers and Food Producers Association
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area	5	2

Evaluation Team Comments:

The proposal identifies #3, to research market expansion. However, the committee felt that the proposal doesn't in fact sufficiently address this priority area.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlines in the RFP	5	2

Evaluation Team Comments:

The outcomes aren't explained - what are they measuring, and why? The survey process isn't clear – information seems to be lacking. Proposal doesn't specify the problem to be solved. The committee is confused about the goals of this project and found it to be incomplete.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as stated in the RFP	25	10

Evaluation Team Comments:

The project narrative focuses a lot on value-added, however SCBG funds can only be used for value-added projects if 50% of the product is a specialty crop. Committee feels the project doesn't take this requirement into consideration, and much of what is proposed would actually be ineligible for SCBG funding. (The project emphasis is on the needs of value-added producers and retailers rather than on specialty crop producers.)

The proposal suggests the project will enhance competitiveness by conducting research, but the connection isn't clear. How will the proposed research increase the competitiveness of specialty crops? Committee discusses how the research could increase competitiveness, but it is confusing and unconvincing. The project does not seem to align with the USDA's intentions for the SCBG program.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Maine Grocers and Food Producers Association
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	7

Evaluation Team Comments:

The proposal casts a broad net without sharing specifics about how the outcomes will be achieved. Where did the numbers come from? The proposal suggests outcomes without explaining the basis for the data. Committee is confused about goals of the proposal. Goals aren't measurable. Applicant talks about the number of people to be reached, but the committee is confused. Applicant says they will *increase consumption* and access, but also argues it will *decrease production*. How will they get there? Are the figures guesstimates? Also, regarding logistics of the surveying, will there be 2 surveys, one initial and one follow-up? The process seems unclear.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	4

Evaluation Team Comments:

They say they will impact 4000+ growers, but will they? It's unclear how the project could impact that many. The vague and broad assertions make it hard to understand how the project will impact SC producers. Letters of support from SC producers would have been helpful to clarify what the impact of the project might be for them. Which SC producers will be impacted? How many producers? They reference 200 consumers or wholesale buyers - but those aren't the same. They reference meetings and conferences as counting towards impact, but there are no meetings and conferences in the proposal. The consumer education reference is confusing too. Committee had trouble sorting through the "buzz words" to try to understand the nuts and bolts of the proposed project.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Maine Grocers and Food Producers Association
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Budget is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost	30	10

Evaluation Team Comments

Budget is simple, which is good, but is lacking explanation for some items. Budget is complete but the justification doesn't explain how expenses will do what's proposed.
 The budget includes personnel and contractual. Technical assistance hourly rate is \$200/hr
 The project references advertising, but there is no advertising in the budget. The 62M consumers referenced can't be *Maine* consumers - this part is confusing as well.
 Committee is not convinced the budget will return the result intended. Concern about the ROI, since with 10 growers growers included the cost is \$3,700 per grower.
 Committee confused about what other technical assistance would be offered. Lack of clarity about some expenses/roles.
 Committee discussed whether to partially fund any component of this project, but the consensus was that the project is too underdeveloped at this point with weaknesses in multiple areas. Data collection is good and important, but to qualify for SCBG funding it needs to directly impact SCBG producers. Consensus is that we should encourage MGFPA to apply again, but to develop a more specific, detailed proposal with measurable outcomes for SCBG producers.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Maine Maple Producers Association
DATE: 9/21/2021

Department Name: Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
 Name of RFP Coordinator: Leigh Hallett
 Names of Evaluators: Ann Gibbs, Joy Bonenfant, Marge Kilkelly

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)		
· Application Cover Page	X	
· Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification	X	
· Litigation	X	
· Executive Summary	X	
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area.	5	3
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP	5	3
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as state in the RFP	25	2
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	7
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	12
Budge is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.	30	17
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>44</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Maine Maple Producers Association
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area	5	3

Evaluation Team Comments:

They do meet number three. Only activities related to #3, not 1 as they claim. Should have shown how they were addressing #1. (They suggest they are supporting Covid safety, but that isn't referenced in the proposal.)

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlines in the RFP	5	3

Evaluation Team Comments:

Some questions are not answered.

The USDA issues are not identified or explained, and didn't check Y/N projects. Disjointed and difficult to follow.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as stated in the RFP	25	2

Evaluation Team Comments:

Applicant copied and pasted the issues content from the RFA into the executive summary with no explanation. Didn't identify issues the project would address nor how project would address them. They didn't identify and explain which strategies would be addressed - that section of the cover is blank. Not defined in proposal. Confusion about what they were trying to address.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Maine Maple Producers Association
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	7

Evaluation Team Comments:

No details on how results will be monitored and measured.
 How will they know how the sales will increase. The data collection method is not clear or complete.
 Building on the experience on what they have already been done.
 There will be a survey, but there is not details about how the data will be collected, or how the results will be monitored and measured. How will this increase sales by 8%, and how will they know that happened? Positive that they are building on past experience. Do we need another customer survey about whether people like Maine maple syrup? The fact that they have used different media approaches is good. Only have 1 indicator.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	12

Evaluation Team Comments:

Some confusion about how many producers will be impacted. Applicant says 520 producers will be impacted. Includes a letter of support. Not clear how the consumer survey will enhance the ongoing marketing campaign.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Budget is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost	30	17

Evaluation Team Comments

This is the 3rd year of MMPA's marketing campaign - the survey and education pieces are new. F2I piece left committee confused - how does it fit in? This component was not compelling to the committee because it was unclear, as was the value of the survey. Expanding the social media, other marketing components were clear and make sense. The Marshall Comm and video components are the strongest. Committee likes the aspect of building on past experience. The idea of a fall event makes sense too - capturing a different audience.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
DATE: 9/21/2021

Department Name: Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
 Name of RFP Coordinator: Leigh Hallett
 Names of Evaluators: Ann Gibbs, Joy Bonenfant, Marge Kilkelly

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)		
· Application Cover Page	X	
· Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification	X	
· Litigation	X	
· Executive Summary	X	
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area.	5	0
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP	5	5
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as state in the RFP	25	24
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	12
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	12
Budge is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.	30	17
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>70</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area	5	0

Evaluation Team Comments:

No priority areas specifically addressed.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlines in the RFP	5	5

Evaluation Team Comments:

Yes it's complete.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as stated in the RFP	25	24

Evaluation Team Comments:

Yes, addresses the sustainability USDA priority and explains it clearly.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	12

Evaluation Team Comments:

Measured through participant survey and 1 year follow up.
 Defined and measurable. The soil health plan template isn't explained in the proposal. They talk about piloting additional complementary practices - what does that mean? Should clarify that when negotiating contract.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	12

Evaluation Team Comments:

Says it will affect 300 growers. Has letters of support from legislators, but they aren't focused on this project, rather than on the legislation - some of the letters are not compelling. Is this limited to MOFGA members or organic producers only? There needs to be clear outreach to others so that they don't self-select out (i.e. to ensure that people don't assume they are excluded). Committee wants to ensure spaces are set aside for conventional growers, setting aside 50%.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Budget is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost	30	17

Evaluation Team Comments

No funds for the workshop and travel, which needs more explanation. Committee appreciates that \$60K of the \$68K is going back to the producers. Committee reiterates that they want to see a stipulation that half of the grant funds should go to conventional growers. What is the amount of the grants, do they vary? How will they determine the amount of the grants? Budget includes personnel to manage grants. There isn't detail about who will run the workshops, and where will the soil health expertise come from? Who will provide the TA? The grant program is the bulk, but there isn't enough detail about the process. There's no money in the budget for the workshop or travel. Does the team that is running the program have the expertise in soil health? Need to add stipulation: DACF to review workshop material in advance. Positive that they are granting most of the funds. No travel, no supplies, no \$\$ for workshops. Even if they aren't included in the budget, they should have been explained in the proposal.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: University of Maine – Dr. Annis
DATE: 9/21/2021

Department Name: Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
Name of RFP Coordinator: Leigh Hallett
Names of Evaluators: Ann Gibbs, Joy Bonenfant, Marge Kilkelly

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)		
· Application Cover Page	X	
· Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification	X	
· Litigation	X	
· Executive Summary	X	
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area.	5	5
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP	5	4
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as state in the RFP	25	22
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	15
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	12
Budge is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.	30	22
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>80</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: University of Maine – Dr. Annis
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area	5	5

Evaluation Team Comments:

#3 since proposal references international markets.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlines in the RFP	5	4

Evaluation Team Comments:

Complete but the outcomes are not clearly explained.
 Focuses on large producers.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as stated in the RFP	25	22

Evaluation Team Comments:

Addresses IPM and Sustainability.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	15

Evaluation Team Comments:

There were 2 objectives identified. Will evaluate via survey and conferences. Not a lot of specifics - very vague about the surveys and presentations. Why the "survey to determine interest"? Seems like the project is coming from industry, which is good, but committee wished there were more detail about how project outcomes would be monitored.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: University of Maine – Dr. Annis
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	12

Evaluation Team Comments:

Will be available to all blueberry growers who are interested in testing.
 LOS indicates it will impact 50 growers. Seems like author is trying to honestly represent who will be impacted.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Budget is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost	30	22

Evaluation Team Comments

Benefits will down the road and not immediate
 Questions about personnel budget: some get fringe and some don't, which raised questions for the committee.
 The numbers add up. Seems to be a good ROI since 50 growers will be impacted. Discussion about whether the growers will want to adopt the new tech or not. Perhaps the larger growers will be more likely to adopt, which would increase impact. The undergrad is only budgeted at \$13/hour - will they need to increase that by the time the grant project is underway?

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: University of Maine – Dr. Ginakes
DATE: 9/21/2021

Department Name: Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
 Name of RFP Coordinator: Leigh Hallett
 Names of Evaluators: Ann Gibbs, Joy Bonenfant, Marge Kilkelly

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)		
· Application Cover Page	X	
· Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification	X	
· Litigation	X	
· Executive Summary	X	
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area.	5	5
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP	5	2
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as state in the RFP	25	10
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	18
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	7
Budge is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.	30	17
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>59</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: University of Maine – Dr. Ginakes
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area	5	5

Evaluation Team Comments:

List #3

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlines in the RFP	5	2

Evaluation Team Comments:

Not complete. Missing narrative
Page 2 starts mid-paragraph

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as stated in the RFP	25	10

Evaluation Team Comments:

It appears the explanation for this section was deleted in error. It appears they will expand the celery market, but explanation is missing.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	18

Evaluation Team Comments:

List outcomes and indicators.
Thorough explanation on data collection.
1 outcome will impact 50 growers. Has a thorough explanation - field trial data sets, other areas.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: University of Maine – Dr. Ginakes
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	7

Evaluation Team Comments:

If growers are interested. It's a difficult crop to grow.
 1 LOS from a vegetable storage facility, not a producer.
 Get concerned if a project is proposed just for funding.
 Application suggests it will impact 50 growers. Committee discusses how realistic that is. No Letters of Support from growers. Who will host the on-farm demos? This portion seems underdeveloped. Need to clarify where the demos will be.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Budget is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost	30	17

Evaluation Team Comments

Funding not going directly to the growers.
 Good explanation of costs for supplies and travels. What is involved with the consumer testing for \$4K? How will that work? Hard to evaluate the ROI. Need to demonstrate interest better.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: University of Maine – Dr. Moran
DATE: 9/21/2021

Department Name: Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
 Name of RFP Coordinator: Leigh Hallett
 Names of Evaluators: Ann Gibbs, Joy Bonenfant, Marge Kilkelly

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)		
· Application Cover Page	X	
· Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification	X	
· Litigation	X	
· Executive Summary	X	
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area.	5	5
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP	5	4
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as state in the RFP	25	24
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	20
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	13
Budge is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.	30	27
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>93</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: University of Maine – Dr. Moran
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area	5	5

Evaluation Team Comments:

Meets #3

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlines in the RFP	5	4

Evaluation Team Comments:

Outcome and indicator is in an odd space.
Page 13, the answer is in the example block, and committee almost missed it. Budget seems incomplete too.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as stated in the RFP	25	24

Evaluation Team Comments:

Very thorough explanation of how they would be meet the usda strategy.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	20

Evaluation Team Comments:

1 outcome and indicator
Specific details regarding data collection plans.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: University of Maine – Dr. Moran
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	13

Evaluation Team Comments:

80 fruit tree growers.
 No LOS for this project, which would have helped the committee better understand industry interest.
 Seems like a functional project that will have high impact.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Budget is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost	30	27

Evaluation Team Comments

Seems like this project offers a strong ROI.
 Project does build off previous experience
 It is low cost, and will result in 100 trees at the end. The project does build off previous SCBG projects, very clearly.
 Need to complete some parts of the budget: p16 budget is lacking detail in several sections (per unit costs, etc.) Will need to complete for State Plan.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Wild Blueberry Commisison of Maine
DATE: 9/21/2021

Department Name: Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
 Name of RFP Coordinator: Leigh Hallett
 Names of Evaluators: Ann Gibbs, Joy Bonenfant, Marge Kilkelly

Pass/Fail Criteria	Pass	Fail
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)		
· Application Cover Page	X	
· Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification	X	
· Litigation	X	
· Executive Summary	X	
Scoring Sections	Points Available	Points Awarded
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area.	5	4
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP	5	5
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as state in the RFP	25	25
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	18
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	12
Budge is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.	30	28
Total Points	100	92

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Wild Blueberry Commisison of Maine
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is determined to be a Commissioner priority area	5	4

Evaluation Team Comments:

Market adaptation related to COVID
 Marketing SC
 2 priority areas, but committee wondered if it really relates to covid response and found that assertion unconvincing.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlines in the RFP	5	5

Evaluation Team Comments:

Should have LOS from external supporters.
 Proposal is complete, but long and unnecessarily dense.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA as stated in the RFP	25	25

Evaluation Team Comments:

Aligns with 3 areas and each had thorough explanation

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection	20	18

Evaluation Team Comments:

Have based line information from 2021.
 5 outcomes. They have already collected some surveys from producers and consumers to establish a baseline.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER: Wild Blueberry Commisison of Maine
DATE: 9/21/2021

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers	15	12

Evaluation Team Comments:

No LOS - committee wanted to see letters.
 Will impact 30 farms directly, 400+ indirectly.

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Budget is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost	30	28

Evaluation Team Comments

Budget is 100% advertising. Is it sustainable?
 Marketing models have changed for farms over the last year. That makes the advertising part of the budget seem more important. Seems like a good investment at this point.
 Builds on past experience.
 Digital advertising and social media is savvy. Clear timeline.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 2021006095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER NAME: Maine Farmland Trust
DATE: 9/2/2021
EVALUATOR NAME: Ann Gibbs
EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by **individual** evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is **required** that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments:

The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application. This project will market Maine specialty crops, with the focus is on making these businesses more sustainable. There was reference to many specific markets that would be targeted.

The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP. Yes

The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies). Sustainability is the USDA strategy and this proposal is focused on helping small scale wild blueberry growers become more sustainable businesses. This will utilize an established business planning program, The Business of Farming, that will be modified for wild blueberry producers.

The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection. There were 3 outcomes identified with specific indicators defined for each outcome. There will be multiple methods and opportunities for collecting data. A specific list of data will be collected from each grower prior to participating in the program (use as a baseline), during and 3 years after the program. 5 years of data. These data will address the specifics listed under each outcome and will be measurable.

The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed. This project should impact 10 small scale wild blueberry growers. Letters of support were provided by potential participants and contractors involved in the project.

Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost. The budget is complete with a clear explanation of the expenses. This project will impact 10 growers and the cost per grower will be \$3700. Each grower will attend 3 day long

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 2021006095

RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Farmland Trust

DATE: 9/2/2021

EVALUATOR NAME: Ann Gibbs

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

workshops, 1 technical assistance on farm visit over a year. It wasn't clear what other technical assistance would be available.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 2021006095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER NAME: Maine Grocers and Food Producers Association
DATE: 9/2/2021
EVALUATOR NAME: Ann Gibbs
EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by **individual** evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is **required** that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments:

The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application. Meets priority #3 researching potential market expansion efforts and strategies.

The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP. Yes, but the proposal doesn't specify a problem to be solved with evidence or support.

The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies). No the proposal does not address any of the USDA strategies listed in the RFP.

The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection. There are 2 outcomes identified and a number of specific numbers of people reached. The monitoring and data collection section contains no specifics.

The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed. There were no letters of support, so not clear which speciality crop producers will be impacted. A number of 4,000 was presented as Maine crop farmers impacted, but there are not letters of support from this group.

Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost. The budget includes personnel costs and a contract. There are references to the outreach component of survey results using TV, print, radio etc. , but not funds included for this purpose. The contractor Atlantic has \$5000 for outreach and extension support, but not clear how this will be utilized. The contractor Dynata will provide access to 62 million consumers. Is the focus of this survey for Maine consumers or consumers everywhere to purchase Maine products? This is not clear.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 2021006095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER NAME: Maine Maple Producers Association
DATE: 09/3/2021
EVALUATOR NAME: Ann Gibbs
EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by **individual** evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is **required** that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments:

The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application. There is a statement that priorities 1 & 3 will be addressed by this proposal, but only activities related to #3 are included in this proposal.

The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP. Not sure. Didn't check whether or not this was a continuation of a previously funded SCBG, but then includes a lot of explanation. Seems to include all the other information required, but was disjointed and difficult to follow.

The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies). Didn't identify and explain which strategies would be addressed in this proposal. The entire section was highlighted with no explanation.

The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection. Included 1 outcome with one indicator listing specific targets in sales. Data collection will be via survey, but there is not a lot of details about then our how this data will be collected. No details on how the results will be monitored and measured.

The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed. Throughout the proposal there is a mention of 500 licensed maple producers. There is one letter of support indicating the marketing that has occurred has been helpful. Not clear how the new consumer survey portion of the proposal will enhance the ongoing marketing campaign from the past few years.

Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost. The budget appears to be complete. Not clear how the Maine Farm to Institution was going to fit into this project. How many years has this project been funded?

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 2021006095

RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association

DATE: 9/2/2021

EVALUATOR NAME: Ann Gibbs

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by **individual** evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is **required** that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments:

The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application. No

The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP. The proposal appears to be complete

The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies). The project does address the strategy of sustainability and provides a clear explanation regarding how to educate and provide technical assistance on soil health to participating farmers to meet this goal.

The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection. There is one outcome identified with a specific number of growers impacted. Data collection will involve a survey of participants post workshop. This project could be enhanced by developing a pre workshop survey to determine the baseline of participants knowledge. There is mention of a soil health plan template, but no explanation of this in the proposal. Follow up survey one year later will be helpful to determine what has been implemented.

The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed. This project aims to impact about 300 specialty crop producers. There are several letter of support from legislators, UMCE and a couple of farmers.

Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost. The budget includes funding for personnel to manage the project and the other grant funds. The proposal will be hosting 3 day long educational sessions, but there is not detail regarding who will run these work shops and where the expertise regarding soil health will come from. It is also not clear who will be providing technical assistance to 12 growers. More detail on this aspect of the proposal is needed. The grant program is the bulk of the project, but little

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 2021006095

RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

BIDDER NAME: Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association

DATE: 9/2/2021

EVALUATOR NAME: Ann Gibbs

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

detail regarding how these funds will be utilized. More detail regarding the process and the use of the funds should be included.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 2021006095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER NAME: University of Maine - Annis
DATE: 9/2/2021
EVALUATOR NAME: Ann Gibbs
EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by **individual** evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is **required** that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments:

The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application. Yes. The proposal will expand markets for wild blueberries into European and Asian markets, by researching acceptable fungicides for controlling specific diseases.

The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP. The proposal is complete and adheres to the RFP format.

The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies). This project addresses two of the strategies listed dealing with pest and disease control and sustainability of the wild blueberry crop in Maine.

The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection. There were 2 objectives identified with indicators showing impact on a number of wild blueberry growers. Monitoring and data collection will occur via surveys to growers and presentations at educational meetings. Not a lot of specifics in the data collection section reporting on outcomes.

The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed. There are 485 wild blueberry growers managing for diseases who could be impacted by this research. There were a number of letters of support from the Wild Blueberry Commission and several large wild blueberry growers in Maine.

Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost. The budget is complete. 76% of the budget is for personnel, including salary and benefits for 83% of a research assistant. The funding would not directly benefit the grower community. Undergrad student is proposed to be paid \$13/hour will that need to be raised to \$15/hour with the state minimum wage change?

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 2021006095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER NAME: University of Maine - Ginakes
DATE: 9/17/2021
EVALUATOR NAME: Ann Gibbs
EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by **individual** evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is **required** that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments:

The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application. Yes. This project will address priority #3 expanding Maine market for a specialty crop.

The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP. Some information is lacking in this proposal (Addressing strategies of USDA), also should include more detail on the actual plant trial set up.

The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies). It appears that the explanation for this section was not complete. Cannot assess whether it will address the strategies put forth by USDA.

The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection. One outcome and indicator would impact 50 vegetable growers. Thorough explanation regarding how the data addressing outcomes would be collected

The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed. There is indication that this will support 50 vegetable growers, but there are no letters of support from the growers. The proposal indicates that there will be 3 on farm demonstration plots. A concern regarding the lack of letters of support is whether or not growers are truly interested in growing this what is characterized throughout the proposal as a "difficult/demanding crop to grow". There is a letter of support from the vegetable storage facility.

Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost. The budget is for \$48K with 80% of the budget funding personnel and fringe benefits. Very little of this funding will directly benefit specialty crop growers. Good

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 2021006095

RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

BIDDER NAME: University of Maine - Ginakes

DATE: 9/17/2021

EVALUATOR NAME: Ann Gibbs

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

explanation of costs for supplies and travel. A little more explanation of what is involved with consumer testing would be helpful.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 2021006095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER NAME: University of Maine - Moran
DATE: 9/17/2021
EVALUATOR NAME: Ann Gibbs
EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by **individual** evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is **required** that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments:

The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application. Yes. This will meet priority #3 market Maine specialty crops to diversified and expanded markets for more cold hardy peach varieties

The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP. Yes

The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies). Yes, developing new and improved seed or plant varieties for specialty crops. Very thorough explanation as to how this project will meet this strategy.

The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection. There is one outcome and indicator pertaining to this project to create one desirable cold hardy peach variety. There are specific details and timeline for collecting data.

The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed. This project could impact 80 fruit growers in Maine. No letters of support were included.

Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost. Budget of \$12K with 80% for personnel a student to perform process working with the seed and maintaining cultures and plant care. Other funding for travel and supplies. This project does build off lessons learned from previous projects funded by SCBG.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 2021006095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
BIDDER NAME: Wild Blueberry Commission
DATE: 9/17/2021
EVALUATOR NAME: Ann Gibbs
EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by **individual** evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is **required** that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments:

The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application. This project will address 2 of the priority areas including: market adaptation related to COVID to benefit businesses & market specialty crop to diversified markets.

The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP. Yes. A suggestion for future proposals would be to summarize and shorten the explanation in certain categories. Also the list of external support entities is extensive, but there should be letters of support from some indicating they are on board and aware of the proposal.

The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies). This project will address 3 strategies: increase knowledge of nutrition, increase efficiencies & reduce costs in distribution systems and increase sustainability. Each of these had an explanation regarding how these would be achieved.

The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection. There will be 5 different measurable outcomes from this project with several different indicators that are defined. Have already collected some participating farm and establishment surveys and online visitor surveys for 2021 that will establish a baseline to help inform what to include on surveys in the future.

The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed. Potentially could impact 485 blueberry growers. 30 farms are participating in Wild Blueberry Weekend events. No letters of support were included.

Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost. The budget is complete. The applicant organization will be donating time to this project. Very clear timeline for the project is included. The bulk of the budget is a contract with a marketing firm, but each of the components of the project with a breakdown of associated costs

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 2021006095

RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

BIDDER NAME: Wild Blueberry Commission

DATE: 9/17/2021

EVALUATOR NAME: Ann Gibbs

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

is included which is helpful. Also there are contracts with social media micro-influencers and digital advertising. All this in an effort to promote the wild blueberry industry in Maine.

Applicant: Maine Farmland Trust

Evaluator: MLK

Date Evaluated: 9.20.21

RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.
#3- specialty crop diversified or expanded markets. Challenging but important.
2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.
3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).
4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.
How did they go to 4- as number of new products? \$50,000 gross revenue/
How long is the 1-1 tech support available?
Evacuating the financial data may indicate to some that blueberries re not feasible for them... will they also receive some tech support/
5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.
Yes, input for need of the program as well as support of the grant.
6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.
Assume 1 staff person live in Portland? Why 6 incentives for 10 participants/
Why tech support for 6?
Workshop facilities in Unity- MFT?

Applicant: Maine Food and Grocers Association

Evaluator: MLK

Date Evaluated: 9.20.21

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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.

Understand the intention, but not sure how it will work.

2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

yes

3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).

4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.

Outcome measures increased consumption and access- yet language talks about the need to decrease availability in order too not flood markets.. how is this achieved/

5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

Unsure of how more than 4,000 producers will benefit.

200 consumers or wholesale buyers reached. How many of each? Need clarification on how survey teaches prep and preserve specialty crops.
LOS??

6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

yes

Applicant: Maine Maple Producers Association
Evaluator: MLK
Date Evaluated: 9.20.21
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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.
#1- how do they support covid safety?
#3-

2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

yes

3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).

4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.

Good job justifying the impact of previous grants.

5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

Yes, the idea to expand to social media makes sense.

6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

Frugal, the MMP clearly are investing their time in the project.

Applicant: Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
Evaluator: MLK
Date Evaluated: 9.20.21
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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.

No- as they point out

2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

Yes- question about Purpose... and pilot additional complementary practices that are not currently supported. What are these? Do they go further away from the priorities?

3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).

4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.

What is process for identifying outcomes-

5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

Is this limited to MOFGA members or organic producers?

6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

No travel or supplies listed...

Applicant: University of Maine – Dr. Annis
Evaluator: MLK
Date Evaluated: 9.20.21
RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.

#3- expand markets based on use of different fungal remediation
2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

Yes- LOS from large producer/processors
3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).
4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.
5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

All producers should benefit from the info- larger ones form expanded international markets
6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

yes

Applicant: University of Maine – Dr. Ginakes

Evaluator: MLK

Date Evaluated: 9.20.21

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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.

#3 yes- new opportunities in specialty crop that is already widely used..exploring the storage issue is critical in a short season state

2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

yes

3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).

Yes- new and improved varieties

4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.

Outcome of 50 farmers adopting seems reasonable -

5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

Yes- providing info about the varieties at Highmoor Farm day and various meetings will have maximum impact

6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

Yes

Applicant: University of Maine – Dr. Moran
Evaluator: MLK
Date Evaluated: 9.20.21
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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.

Yes- #3 expand market by improving stock

2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

Yes

3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).

Yes, new/improved varieties

4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.

Yes

5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

If successful it is reasonable to assume that both growers and nursery sellers will benefit. LOS??

6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

yes

Applicant: Wild Blueberry Commission

Evaluator: MLK

Date Evaluated: 9.20.21

RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.

Yes expand info and consumption

2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

yes

3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).

Yes

4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.

Yes- builds on previous experience and fundung

5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

yes

6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

yes

Applicant: Maine Farmland Trust
Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant
Date Evaluated: 8/31/2021
RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.

#3 Training curriculum focuses on developing value-added products based on market research, extending the shelf-life of blueberries and stabilizing business cash flow. Also, farmers will likely be more successful in in efforts to develop/pursue new market opportunities.

2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

Proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).

Increasing sustainability by supporting farmers with Fin planning and marketing decisions. Hoping the program will keep participating farmers in the ag sector in a more diversified, resilient way.

4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection. 2-3-8

O211. 4 new/spec crops introduced

O311. 15 access pts = 4 farmers markets + 5 grocery stores + 1 wholesale mkt + 5 farm selling direct to consumer

O312. 6 access pts = 1 farmer mkt + 2 grocery stores + 1 wholesale mkt + 2 other not noted

O811. 15 jobs maintained

O812. 10 small businesses created/maintained

O813. \$50k increased gross sales across 10 small farms

Data Collection & Methods of Monitoring

Workshop surveys, setting farmer-identified goals, phone check-in, yr end evals, tracking production, sales fin data for 5 seasons. Farm data collected includes principal products, acreage (in production, cover, hay, perennials, forest), gross sales, customer base, expenses, net profit/margin, assets/liabilities/equity, # of employees and seasonality and demographic data.

Applicant: Maine Farmland Trust
Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant
Date Evaluated: 8/31/2021
RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

10 total farms to participate in program (7-9 growers + 1 or 2 start-up/community growers. Cost of impact = approx. \$3,754.45.

6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

Total Ask = \$37,544.93 + Revenue of \$5,000 (returned to participants)

Concern: Alex and Catherine's pay increases from \$30 per hour to \$200 per hour when providing technical assistance??

Note: \$1,000 seed money to participants includes \$500 registration fee return to farmers/participants.

Note: Cost of impact = approx. \$3,754.45 per

Applicant: Maine Grocers and Food Prod Assoc
Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant
Date Evaluated: 8/31/2021
RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.

#3. Research potential market expansion efforts by conducting research on locally sourced fruits/veggies to provide stakeholders with current consumer preference data that will identify/evaluate mkt opportunities. This can enable them to satisfy consumer demand, expand their business, improve profitability and increase sales.

2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

The proposal is not complete, except how the outcomes are measurable is not explained. I would like to have had more explanation on the survey process, it is unclear as to how the results will be measured. There is explanation that the consumer portion will be communicated but the Outcome/Indicator results rely on a second survey that is not described.

3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).

Enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops, the project will identify/qualify mkt opportunities, assess consumption, purchasing behavior, perceived quality and availability and consumer characteristics. Provide evidence of consumer demand during process of selling products through wholesalers and retailers. Data can also be used as basis for successful, highly targeted marketing/advertising campaigns and materials to overcome consumer concerns.

4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.

O2B. 400 gaining knowledge, 300 intended to eat more

O3IA. CONSUMERS: 400 gain knowledge on how to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops, 320 reported an intention to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops and 200 reported supplementing diets with specialty crops that they produced/prepared/obtained/preserved.

Applicant: Maine Grocers and Food Prod Assoc

Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant

Date Evaluated: 8/31/2021

RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

O3IA. WHOLESALE BUYERS: 200+ gain knowledge on how to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops, 1600 reported an intention to access/produce/prepare/preserve specialty crops.

O3IC. 150 grocery stores expanded and/or improved offerings of specialty crops

O3ID. 20 new grocery stores offering specialty crops

Are these figures guestimates? How were these numbers arrived at? How will they be measured? Will there be 2 surveys, one initial to consumers and one follow up to the supply chain?

5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

4,904 crop farm operations and other stakeholders through extensive outreach efforts.

Communication of survey results, market analysis and findings. Tracking the number and type of stakeholders reached through a combination of direct contact, attendance at meetings and conferences, publicity and downloads of published results.

I am not sure that providing survey results is measurable or impactful. Tracking through attendance at what meetings and conferences?

6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

Budget is complete, clear, easy, \$5k Personnel, \$24,800 contractual.

Applicant: Maine Maple Producers Assoc

Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant

Date Evaluated: 9/7/2021

RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.

#1 – Adopt open house/maple event procedures to ensure customer/business safety in respect to Covid 19.

#3. Enable a partnership to create training and guidance opportunities for Maine maple producers to expand current marketing avenues into institutional and larger wholesale accounts. Identify marketing opportunities, gaps, and needs to aid producers in better targeting the marketing and sales efforts.

2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

The proposal is not complete, USDA issues not identified or explained, there are also 2 yes/no questions left unanswered.

3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).

Not defined in the proposal!

Reaching to meet Enhanced Food Safety, Covid 19 customer/business safety mentioned but not specifically to food.

Improving Efficiency and reducing costs of distributions systems would also be reaching, the tool kit improves efficiency and reduced costs for the producers if they use the tool kit but this doesn't reduce the cost of distribution systems.

4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.

O1I1 – Increased gross sales of Maine maple syrup by 8%. Information gathered via written and Survey Monkey surveys. Data will be collected from the New England Agricultural Statistics Reports and from economic impact analysis report that is currently underway. How will they know the sales have increased by 8%. The data collection method is not complete or clear.

Applicant: Maine Maple Producers Assoc

Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant

Date Evaluated: 9/7/2021

RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

On page 3 of the proposal they state 260 members of the MMPA and over 520 licensed maple producers in the state will all benefit from the promotion and branding from the results this project but on page 8 they state 500 project beneficiaries.

6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

Nancy Marshall Communications is a flat budget of \$80/hr for 125 hours. How much airtime is included in this, what is that breakdown of expenses?

Video Production (TBD) will be travelling, to where at what mileage rate?

Applicant: Maine Organic Farmers-Gardeners Assoc
Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant
Date Evaluated: 9/15/2021
RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.

The proposal does not meet the Commissioners priority area.

2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined.

3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).

The proposal addresses the issue of sustainability. Heathy soil and lessen the effects of climate change is the proposal focus. Teaching farmers climate resiliency, adopting and implementing practices and providing funding to do so.

4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.

#4 – of the 300 growers/producers attending training, 100 indicate adoption of rec practices
50 growers/producers report a reduction in pesticides, fertilizer and water used per acre
50 producers report increased dollar returns per acre or reduced costs per acre

Measured through participant survey, end of pilot program evaluation, assess grant program participants increased knowledge with a final soil health template which will determine effectiveness of program. One year follow up with participants and record %ages of soil health practices adopted and collect data on improved production.

5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

300 specialty crop producers will benefit

100 will attend educational/training programs

12+ producers will receive technical assistance

300+ producers will have access to info on the central resource hub

12 producers will receive grants (\$60,000 which is the bulk of the ask!!!!)

Applicant: Maine Organic Farmers-Gardeners Assoc

Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant

Date Evaluated: 9/15/2021

RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

Bulk of the budget is the \$60,000 in grants directly to farmers. At least 12 grants, possibly more. I would like to see how the amount of grants and to whom receives will be determined.

Personnel seems reasonable, 229 total pay hours for this program.

Anna Mueller will be organizing and facilitating 2 soil health workshops and 3 farms tours but there is \$0 in the budget for these expenses??

Applicant: UMaine - Annis
Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant
Date Evaluated: 9/15/2021
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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.

#3 – Will allow wild blueberries to be marketed to new international buyers and maintain current buyers. Using new low cost, effective and low risk materials to control diseases, to maintain yield to provide enough product to supply markets and make them acceptable to foreign markets.

2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

The proposal is complete, the outcomes are not clearly measurable.

3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).

The proposal will improve control of Sphaerulina leaf spot, stem blights and other diseases will improve the sustainability of the wild blueberry industry and decrease its impact on the environment by investing in crop research in the issue of disease control with a focus on decreasing environmental impacts of control methods and sustaining wild blueberry industry.

4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.

O4Ib.i = 50 growers

O5Ia.II = One new diagnostic technology will be available for detecting plant diseases

O5Ih. = 100 growers will gain knowledge about science-based tools through outreach and education

Education meetings/field days, bulletins and reports to growers.

growers at meetings will be counted

Computer generated surveys used to determine interest in adopting new recommendation

Diagnostic tool will be considered functional if it can be used to detect the fungus in diseased leaves

Not clearly measurable! Counting growers and a survey to determine **interest**??? How does the newly developed tool help the 458 growers, will they all have continued access to the tool? Is the molecular

Applicant: UMaine - Annis

Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant

Date Evaluated: 9/15/2021

RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

tool on pg 9 needed by all 458 growers? Only 50 growers will be interested in adopting new recommended methods. Only 50 out of 458? Why will only 100 growers gain knowledge when there are 458, this is not even 25%?

5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

485 blueberry growers managing 41,000 acres of wild blueberry land.

6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

Budget adds up correctly.

Cost of Impact $\$73,862 / 50$ growers (outcomes/indicators counts) = 1477.24 for each grower to only *"be interested in adopting* new recommended methods of controlling pathogens" (quote from page 9).

Applicant: UMaine - Ginakes
Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant
Date Evaluated: 9/15/2021
RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.

#3 – expanding the Maine market for celery. Only 19 of Maine's 170+ veggie farms grow celery. Celery is a high value crop.

2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

Top of page 2 starts in the middle of a sentence?

3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).

Section is incomplete, explanation starts in the middle of a sentence.

The storage study will ensure that high-yielding, high quality celery also keeps well enough to supply local markets into the winter season. Expanding the celery market.

4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.

O4I2.a = 50 veggie farmers will adopt recommended celery varieties and/or growing practices.

Field trial data sets gathered, including size, yield, production costs, susceptibility to disease, compactness, green color, firmness, and pithiness resulting from all varieties and production practices. Data will be used to develop production recommendations for Maine growers.

Three growers will get hands-on experience in demonstration plots that they will communicate to at grower meetings.

Consumer preference testing – 75 to 100 people will participate in sampling and answer questions on sample color, aroma, flavor and texture using a rating scale.

Applicant: UMaine - Ginakes

Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant

Date Evaluated: 9/15/2021

RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Storage study testing celery varieties, including duration and container durability. Tests will be biweekly for at least 2 months.

RESULTS will be shares with Maine and New England area farmers through multiple means.

Highmoor Farm Field Day

MSFVGA Twilight meeting

2023 Maine AG Trades Show

Mar 2023 Maine Fruits & Veggies School

At least one Extension bulletin

One Academic publication

5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

Estimate: 50 veggie growers will add celery to their system or augment their celery production as result of this project.

6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

Budget is complete.

Cost impact is \$48,058 / 50 farmers = \$961 per veggie growers **will add** celery to their system or augment their celery production as result of this project.

Applicant: UMaine - Moran
Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant
Date Evaluated: 9/15/2021
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Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.

#3 – Expand the market for Maine Specialty crops by developing peach varieties with greater cold hardiness. Allow Maine farmers to diversify the fruit crops grown in the state. An additional fruit crop could increase the resilience of farms if adverse weather or difficulty in marketing impairs the ability to grow and sell apples.

2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

Outcome 4a on page 13 is in the example block, I almost missed it.

The supply portion of the budget is missing details required in the form.

3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).

Developing new and improved seed (or plant) varieties for specialty crops.

Goal is to expand collection of new seedlings from 8 trees to over 100 trees by using an embryo rescue technique that can potentially increase seed germination from <10% - 50% (depending on variety) to as high as 90%. Seeds will be extracted from fruit while they are still viable and then cultured in a lab on a sterile nutrient media. Following germination, they will be grown out in a nursery for evaluation.

4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.

O41a – The breeding program at Highmoor Farm will generate at least one desirable cold hardy peach variety for commercial production in Maine and for hobby peach growers.

Measure Seed germination from traditional methods. 100 peach seeds will be potted and cold stored until April 2022 when germination begins. 100 seeds will be cultured on aga media under sterile conditions and cold stored until April. Germinated seeds will be transferred to an outdoor nursery in

Applicant: UMaine - Moran

Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant

Date Evaluated: 9/15/2021

RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

May 2022. In Sept 2022 repeat the process. As a follow up, measure # of seedlings that remain alive after growing out in nursery and the # that eventually become successfully established in an orchard. These trees will be maintained as a fruiting orchard for cold hardiness and fruit quality measurements.

5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

80 fruit tree growers, orchards in other northern states, numerous nurseries and garden centers and home gardeners.

6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

Supply portion of the budget is missing required details, how many grow lights at what cost or 1 at \$600? Same with media, plant hormones, nutrients, and containers.

Cost impact $\$12,672 / 100$ peach trees = $\$126.72$ plus those trees will reproduce.

Applicant: Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine

Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant

Date Evaluated: 9/17/2021

RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Instructions: *The purpose of this form is to record proposal review notes written by **individual** evaluators for this Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It is **required** that each individual evaluator make notes for each proposal that he or she reviews. No numerical scoring should take place on these notes, as that is performed only during team consensus evaluation meetings. A separate form is available for team consensus evaluation notes and scoring. Once complete, please submit a copy of this document to your Department's RFP Coordinator or Lead Evaluator for this RFP.*

Individual Evaluator Comments:

1. The proposal is determined to meet a Commissioner priority area, as clearly demonstrated in the application.

#2 – I personally think this one is a stretch...I do not think that this project "Related to Covid-19" benefits business.

#3 – I do agree with this one though. Marketing special crops to expanded markets. WBW will create an opportunity for farms without a dist channel to sell products to a higher value market that garners 10-20 times the farm gate price. Farm participation incentivizes value-added production and the development of on-farm sales capacity as the more variety a farm can offer during the event, the more they can earn.

2. The proposal is complete and adheres to the format outlined in the RFP.

The proposal is complete, adheres to the format and is FULL of useful information.

3. The project addresses the issues put forth by USDA, as stated in the RFP (Part II, Section A, Strategies).

3 areas!!

Increase child/adult nutritional knowledge by 1. Train the trainer about blueberry health story, provide brochures and social media kit. 2. Increase health/nutrition focus of online and print mktg campaign. 3. Highlight health story to the media.

Increase efficiencies/reduce costs of dist systems by 1. Doubling # of participating farms to 30 and 2. Employ farmer to farmer training to increase sales performance

4. The outcomes and indicators are clearly defined and are clearly measurable, including methods of monitoring and data collection.

1-2-3-4-8

Applicant: Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine

Evaluator: Joy Bonenfant

Date Evaluated: 9/17/2021

RFA# 202106095 HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

O1. Increase average sale on participating farms by 150%

O2Ia. Estimated 3200 children will intend to eat more berries

O2Ib. Estimated 4800 adults will intend to eat more berries

O3Ia. Estimated 7000 will report and intention to access/produce/preserve spec crops

O3Ic. 27 farms will report expanded/improved offerings of MWB and 70 non farms will report expanded/improved

O3Id. 10 will report offering MWB for the first time (new access point)

O4Ib. 27 will adopt best practices and technologies increase the economic return for production by increasing sales direct to customer

O8Id. 15 will report sales, customer relationships, and market development resulting helped them to maintain their small wild blueberry farm business.

5. The project proposed will measurably impact multiple Specialty Crop producers; LOS provided as needed.

The project will directly benefit 30 participating wild blueberry farms and will indirectly benefit all 485 farms in the industry by leveraging impressions on millions of consumers to drive demand for Maine wild blueberries across the nation.

6. Budget is complete and clearly indicate anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost.

Budget is complete and clearly indicates anticipated benefit in relation to the proposed cost, budget is all advertising (print, media, social media).

Will the WB Commission have to make this same request every year? 😞



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION
AND FORESTRY

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner

AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

I, (print name at right) E. Ann Gibbs
accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

Neither I nor any member of my immediate family have a personal or financial interest, direct or indirect, in the bidders whose proposals I will be reviewing. "Interest" may include, but is not limited to: current or former ownership in the bidder's company; current or former Board membership; current or former employment with the bidder; current or former personal contractual relationship with the bidder (example: paid consultant); and/or current or former relationship to a bidder's official which could reasonably be construed to constitute a conflict of interest (personal relationships may be perceived by the public as a potential conflict of interest).

I have not advised, consulted with or assisted any bidder in the preparation of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP nor have I submitted a letter of support or similar endorsement.

I understand that the evaluation process is to be conducted in an impartial manner. In this regard, I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, there are no circumstances that would reasonably support a good faith charge of bias. I further understand that in the event a good faith charge of bias is made, it will rest with me to decide whether I should be disqualified from participation in the evaluation process.

I agree to hold confidential all information related to the contents of Requests for Proposals presented during the review process until such time as the Department formally releases the funding decision notices for public distribution.

E. Ann Gibbs
Signature

August 24, 2021
Date



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION
AND FORESTRY

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner

AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

I, (print name at right) Joy Bonenfant
accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

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Joy Bonenfant
Signature

August 24, 2021
Date



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Janet T. Mills
Governor

Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner

AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFP #: 202106095
RFP TITLE: HR-133 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

I, (print name at right) Marge Kilkelly
accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

Neither I nor any member of my immediate family have a personal or financial interest, direct or indirect, in the bidders whose proposals I will be reviewing. "Interest" may include, but is not limited to: current or former ownership in the bidder's company; current or former Board membership; current or former employment with the bidder; current or former personal contractual relationship with the bidder (example: paid consultant); and/or current or former relationship to a bidder's official which could reasonably be construed to constitute a conflict of interest (personal relationships may be perceived by the public as a potential conflict of interest).

I have not advised, consulted with or assisted any bidder in the preparation of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP nor have I submitted a letter of support or similar endorsement.

I understand that the evaluation process is to be conducted in an impartial manner. In this regard, I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, there are no circumstances that would reasonably support a good faith charge of bias. I further understand that in the event a good faith charge of bias is made, it will rest with me to decide whether I should be disqualified from participation in the evaluation process.

I agree to hold confidential all information related to the contents of Requests for Proposals presented during the review process until such time as the Department formally releases the funding decision notices for public distribution.

Marge Kilkelly
Signature

August 24, 2021
Date