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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ohio Department of Agriculture Accepting Specialty Crop Grant Proposals

\$600,000 available to promote the growing of fruits, vegetables, flowers and nut crops

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (May 5, 2011) – The Ohio Department of Agriculture is now accepting proposals for the 2011 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, which will provide funding for projects to enhance the competitiveness of crops such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, and nursery crops.

The USDA Agriculture Marketing Service will make approximately \$600,000 of grant funding available to Ohio. The deadline for online grant proposal submissions is May 27, 2011 by 4 p.m. Grants will range from a minimum of \$15,000 to a maximum of \$100,000. In addition, all applicants must provide a minimum match of 25 percent of the requested grant amount.

Project proposals are sought that will advance the long-term economic viability of the state's specialty crop industry while increasing the marketability of specialty crops. Higher rankings will be given to projects that demonstrate profit potential for growers and that could boost employment opportunities in the specialty crop industry.

Food and agricultural non-profit organizations, cooperatives, associations or commodity groups, universities and research institutions are eligible to submit specialty crop proposals.

For more information, available forms, or a copy of the request for proposals, visit the Ohio Department of Agriculture's website at www.agri.ohio.gov/grants.

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