



# Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

## Grant Manual

Fiscal Year 2008 Funding Cycle-Farm Bill  
Allocation  
(10/1/2008 - 9/30/2009)

**Application Due Date:  
June 22, 2009**

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[www.wvagriculture.org](http://www.wvagriculture.org)



State of West Virginia  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
Gus R. Douglass, Commissioner

Janet L. Fisher  
Deputy Commissioner

Steve Hannah  
Deputy Commissioner

May 25, 2009

Dear Grant Applicant:

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture is pleased to provide this manual as a guide to assist you in preparation of your Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP). The purpose of this program is to promote the increased consumption of fruits, vegetables, nuts, honey and other specialty products and to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops in West Virginia.

This manual is designed to assist you in preparing your grant application successfully in order to maximize the competitiveness of your project in the review process. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the application requirements and deadlines.

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture anticipates that grant monies awarded under this program will be available in 2008. The maximum grant application amount is \$10,000.00. General program information, rating criteria and application packet requirements are included.

This round of competitive grant funding is the second in calendar year 2008 and is part of the Farm Bill allocation. It differs from the previous round in that grant funds are not issued at the onset and require quarterly draw downs based on actual and anticipated expenditures. The application, contract and reporting requirements for both programs are similar.

Please feel free to call the Marketing & Development Division (304-558-2210) for questions and application procedures as you prepare your project. Thank you for your interest in this important program and we look forward to receiving your application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Gus R. Douglass".

Gus R. Douglass  
Commissioner

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## List of Terms and Acronyms

**Administrative Costs**-All executive, organizational, and clerical costs associated with the general management of an organization and not costs for the direct execution of the grant project. Requests for these expenditures are not allowed under the SCBGP-FB.

**AMS**-Agricultural Marketing Service (a division of USDA)

**Authorized Signature**-Signature of authorized signer, title within the organization is requested.

**Authorized Signer**-Individual authorized to receive funds on behalf of grantee and the person who becomes responsible for the execution of grant project responsibilities.

**Collaboration**-Any cooperative effort of eligible applicants, universities, or industry trade associations to execute the completion of the proposed grant project.

**DBA**-Doing business as

**FY2008**-Federal fiscal year 2008; October 1, 2008 to September 30, 2009

**Grant Award Agreement**-WVDA's contract with the authorized signer indicating the grantee's intention to complete the proposed tasks and authorizing WVDA to monitor the progress of the proposed project.

**Matching Funds**-A cash contribution toward the completion of the project or new, verifiable in-kind expenditures that the applicant or collaborators will incur contingent upon receiving a grant award; matching funds are not required but strongly encouraged to strengthen the competitiveness of the application.

**Project**- Activities proposed to be funded by the SCBGP

**Specialty Crop**-Fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and nursery crops (including floriculture). See expanded list on page 6.

**SCBGP**-Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

**SCBGP-FM**-Specialty Crop Block Grant Program-Farm Bill

**USDA**-United States Department of Agriculture

**WVDA**-West Virginia Department of Agriculture

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture is to protect plant, animal and human health and the state's food supply through a variety of scientific and regulatory programs; to provide vision, strategic planning and emergency response for agricultural and other civil emergencies; to promote industrial safety and protect consumers through educational and regulatory programs; and to foster economic growth by promoting West Virginia agriculture and agribusinesses throughout the state and abroad.

## **Background**

The Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 authorized the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to promote the increased consumption of fruits, vegetables, nuts and to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Under the Act, the Secretary of Agriculture is directed to make grants to States for each of the fiscal years 2005 through 2009 to be used by State departments of agriculture to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

## **Funding Source and Available Funds**

AMS is charged with distributing approximately \$7 million in block grant funds to state departments of agriculture, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. WVDA has been notified that USDA has allocated approximately \$90,000.00 in funds available for competitive proposal purposes in the fiscal year 2008 funding cycle. Grant awards are capped at \$10,000.000 per grant. Determination of funding allocations will be competitive with awards made to the top qualifying applicants. Matching contributions by applicants, although not required, are highly encouraged and will be factored into the approval criteria.

Only one proposal from an organization may be submitted for consideration.

Travel expenses associated with the project shall follow the WVDA travel policy.

Grant funds may not be used to fund political activities in accordance with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. 1501-1508 and 7324-7326).

## **Eligible Applicants**

State and/or local organizations, producer associations, academia, community based organizations, and other specialty crop stakeholders are eligible to apply either as single entities or in combined efforts.

Proposals that involve collaboration or partnerships between producers, industry groups, academics, or other organizations are encouraged and will be given priority.

Under USDA rules, grants can not be awarded for projects that directly benefit a particular commercial product or provide a profit to a single company or individual. Be sure to include outreach, industry benefit and/or technology distribution methods in your proposal.

### **Eligible Specialty Crops**

Commonly recognized fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and nursery crops (including floriculture) are eligible specialty crops in addition to the following:

Algae	Honey
Christmas trees	Hops
Cocoa	Kava
Coffee	Lavender
Cut flowers	Maple syrup
Dry edible beans	Mushrooms
Dry peas	Peppermint
Foliage	Potatoes
Fruit grapes for wine	Seaweed
Ginger root	Spearmint
Ginseng	Vanilla
Herbs	Vegetable Seeds

### **Ineligible Commodities**

Cotton and cottonseed  
Feed crops such as barley, corn, hay, oats, sorghum grain, millet, alfalfa  
Flaxseed  
Food grains such as rice, rye, wheat  
Livestock and dairy products, including eggs  
Marine or fresh water aquaculture  
Oil crops such as peanut, soybean, sunflower, safflower, rapeseed, canola, mustard seed  
Peanuts  
Range grasses  
Sod  
Sugar beets  
Sugarcane  
Tobacco  
Turf

## **Project Eligibility**

Project proposals should focus on enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops through one or more of the following four categories:

- a. Promotion/Marketing
- b. Research
- c. Education/Training
- d. Innovation/Efficiency (Facilities/Equipment)

Examples of “enhancing the competitiveness” of specialty crops includes but is not limited to: research, promotion, marketing, nutrition, trade enhancement, food safety, food security, plant health programs, education, “buy local” programs, increased consumption, increased innovation, improved efficiency and reduced costs of distribution systems, environmental concerns and conservation, product development, and developing cooperatives.

Funding under this program will be available for projects extending no more than three years beyond the project start date.

## **Eligible Expenditures**

Examples of eligible expenses include, but are not limited to: promotional materials, such as signs and brochures for farmers’ markets; developing associations to promote specialty crops; creating a cooperative to increase “purchasing power”; consumer education and increased consumption marketing campaigns (i.e. buy local initiative); product development of specialty crops; improved planting techniques to increase yield, and innovative fencing use to protect crops.

In situation where project benefits include non-eligible specialty crops (i.e. produce market selling crafts and meats). Project budgets must be pro-rated to only include specialty crops.

## **Ineligible Expenditures**

Ineligible SCBGP expenses include, but are not limited to; brick and mortar (construction) projects; establishing secondary grant pools (sub grants to other entities or pass-through grants), land acquisitions, taxes, vehicle registration, paying off existing debt, substituting existing efforts or research already funded, business entertainment or business gifts, overhead expenses or indirect costs, legal costs, contingency funds, proposal preparation, insurance, contractual project administration, costs for which payment has or will be received under another federal, state, or private funding program, any expenses incurred prior to the award date of this grant, personal labor and expenses, and political or lobbying activities.

No administration costs may be allocated to the budgeted project.

## **General Compliance**

All awarded grant projects must comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations and the terms of the grant award.

## **Permitting Requirements**

SCBGP funded projects may involve conducting work that requires permits and clearances from various agencies. WVDA does not determine which, if any, permits are required for specific projects nor does it review permits for accuracy or appropriateness. Applicants are responsible for determining, obtaining and paying for all necessary permits that apply to their project.

## **Indemnification**

The parties to this contract agree that the State of West Virginia, its departments, agencies, boards and commissions shall be indemnified and held harmless by the contractor for the vicarious liability of the State as a result of entering into this contract. Each party to this contract is responsible for its own negligence.

## **Non-Availability of Funds**

Every payment obligation of the State under the Grant Award Agreement will be conditioned upon the availability of such funds appropriated or allocated for the payment of such obligation. If funds are not allocated and available for the continuance of the Agreement, the Agreement may be terminated by the State at the end of the period for which funds are available. No liability shall accrue to the State in the event this provision is exercised, and the State shall not be obligated or liable for any future payments or for any damages as a result of termination under this paragraph.

## **Records Requirements**

The grantee will be responsible for setting up and maintaining a project file that contains all records of correspondence with WVDA, receipts, invoices and copies of all reports and documents associated with the project. All records shall be subject to inspection and audit by state personnel at reasonable times. Upon request, the grantee shall produce a legible copy of any or all such records.

All applicants must submit a final report for their project specifying how the goals and results were met.

Submission of documents to become a registered West Virginia vendor is the responsibility of the grant recipient. If you received a specialty crops grant in past fiscal years, awarding of funding in this cycle is contingent on submission of a final or progress report for the previous award; federal audit waiver requests and West Virginia Affidavit of Expenditures must also be on file.

Any information or data derived from a West Specialty Crops Block Grant must be made available to WVDA, which reserves the right to share these results with the general public. This may include revenue and attendance figures that will be used to prepare collective industry reports on the progress and effectiveness of the West Virginia Specialty Crops Grant Program initiative.

### **Annual Reports**

Grantees are required to submit written performance reports annually to WVDA detailing the project status and how grant monies were used to achieve project outcomes outlined in the project proposal submitted with the grant application packet. Annual reports are due on December 31 of the calendar year and should also include a financial report submitted in the form of a narrative, copies of receipts and a completed expenditure log. Performance reports must be submitted to WVDA on an annual basis until the project is completed at which time a final, comprehensive report is due.

### **Monitoring**

WVDA reserves the ability to perform site monitoring visits to any and all grantees to ensure that work is progressing within the required time frame and that fiscal procedures are followed accurately and appropriately. Monitoring includes both financial and program information as well as site visits.

### **Printed Materials**

The following copy must be included on all printed materials and advertisements relating to the project: *"Funds for this project were provided through the West Virginia Department of Agriculture and the USDA's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program."* Please include this statement in your project proposal.

### **Budget and Grant Period Adjustments**

If a project budget adjustment is needed during the project period, a written request must be made to WVDA describing the reallocation, redefining of project dates or other significant changes to the project submitted and approved. Changes and adjustments are subject to WVDA and/or USDA approval. Please describe the circumstances and reasoning for any adjustments clearly. A change/extension form will be signed by a WVDA representative once USDA approval has been granted.

Requests for extensions beyond the project end date must be made in writing at least 30 days before the completion date. A signed form must be executed and no grant extension will be granted beyond the 3 year grant end date.

## **Unexpended Funds**

Grantees who receive grant funds will return to WVDA the unexpended balance of awarded grant funds at the end of the grant period.

## **Application Packet Details and Format**

Application packets must be submitted in entirety. Incomplete application packets will not be given further consideration. Your application packet must include the following:

Proposal must be organized and have the requested information in the sequence presented under the section, **Application Packet Information.**

- An entity may only submit one application.
- Proposals should be typed, single spaced and in 12 point format.
- Illegible application packets may be determined to be ineligible.
- Proposals must be submitted on 8.5x11 white paper with one inch margins.
- Each page should be numbered, with applicant's name at the top of each page.
- It is strongly suggested that application packets not exceed 20 pages including supplemental documentation.
- If the organization received a previous SCBGP award, the proposal should clearly describe the previous project and its key results and explain why this is a new project. Sustainability of programs will be considered with previous grant award recipients.
- Do not bind application packets. All application packets should be paper clipped in the upper left-hand corner.
- An electronic version of the application packet (in MS Word format) should be submitted to one of the email addresses listed in the contact information.
- Submit ONE complete original application packet and FOUR additional copies.
- The person authorized to receive funds must sign the original copy of the application.

## **Application Packet Due Date**

WVDA's Marketing and Development Division must receive completed application packets no later than **3:00 p.m. on Monday, June 22, 2009. This is not a postmark deadline; application packets must be received by the grant deadline and time.** Application packets that do not adhere to this deadline will not be accepted and will be returned unopened. Due to USDA deadlines, original documents must be submitted. No faxes accepted without originals.

Application packets must be mailed or delivered to:

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program  
West Virginia Department of Agriculture  
Marketing & Development Division  
1900 Kanawha Blvd East  
Charleston, WV 25305

**Contact Information**

Melissa Hudson  
(304) 558-2210  
(304) 558-2270  
[mhudson@ag.state.wv.us](mailto:mhudson@ag.state.wv.us)

Cindy Martel  
(304) 541-9756  
(304) 469-3718  
[cmartel@ag.state.wv.us](mailto:cmartel@ag.state.wv.us)

**West Virginia Department of Agriculture  
Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Application  
FY2008  
FARM BILL ALLOCATION**

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

Application form and packet must be completed in its entirety and required documentation attached.  
All applications should be typed.  
Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.  
Refer to the application guidelines when completing your submission.  
**All information requested on the cover sheet MUST be provided.**

**Business Information**

1. Name of Agribusiness\_\_\_\_\_
2. Federal Tax ID Number or Social Security Number\_\_\_\_\_
3. Mailing Address\_\_\_\_\_
4. City/Zip\_\_\_\_\_
5. Agribusiness type (Corporation, partnership, sole proprietor, other)  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. President, Owner, Officer\_\_\_\_\_ (Include title)
7. Manager (If different)\_\_\_\_\_
8. Phone\_\_\_\_\_ FAX\_\_\_\_\_
9. Years in Business\_\_\_\_\_ Number of Employees\_\_\_\_\_
10. E-Mail Address\_\_\_\_\_ Web Address\_\_\_\_\_

**Project Information**

11. Project Name\_\_\_\_\_
12. Location of Proposed Project\_\_\_\_\_
13. County of Proposed Project\_\_\_\_\_ (indicate if project is statewide or regional in nature)
14. Amount of time (months) needed to complete project\_\_\_\_\_
15. Is this the first time you have applied for this grant? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No
16. If no, what was the past project/fiscal year of funding?\_\_\_\_\_

Grant Category (check category that best describes your grant)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farmers Market                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Specialty Crop Marketing/Promotions  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specialty Crop Education/Extension | <input type="checkbox"/> Specialty Crop Research /Innovations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honey/Beekeeping                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____               |

## Application Packet Information

### Application Packet Requirements

All applicants **MUST** adhere to the following instructions, in addition to other requirements as stated in this grant manual, including all definitions and abbreviations, to be considered eligible for grants. Application Packets missing any of the required information may be deemed ineligible and not considered for funding.

- 1. Cover page and abstract**-Include the name of the applicant or organization administering the project along with an abstract of **200** or fewer words describing the proposed project.



**2. Project Purpose**-Clearly state the specific issue, problem, interest or need to be addressed. Explain why the project is important and timely. (Do not exceed one page)

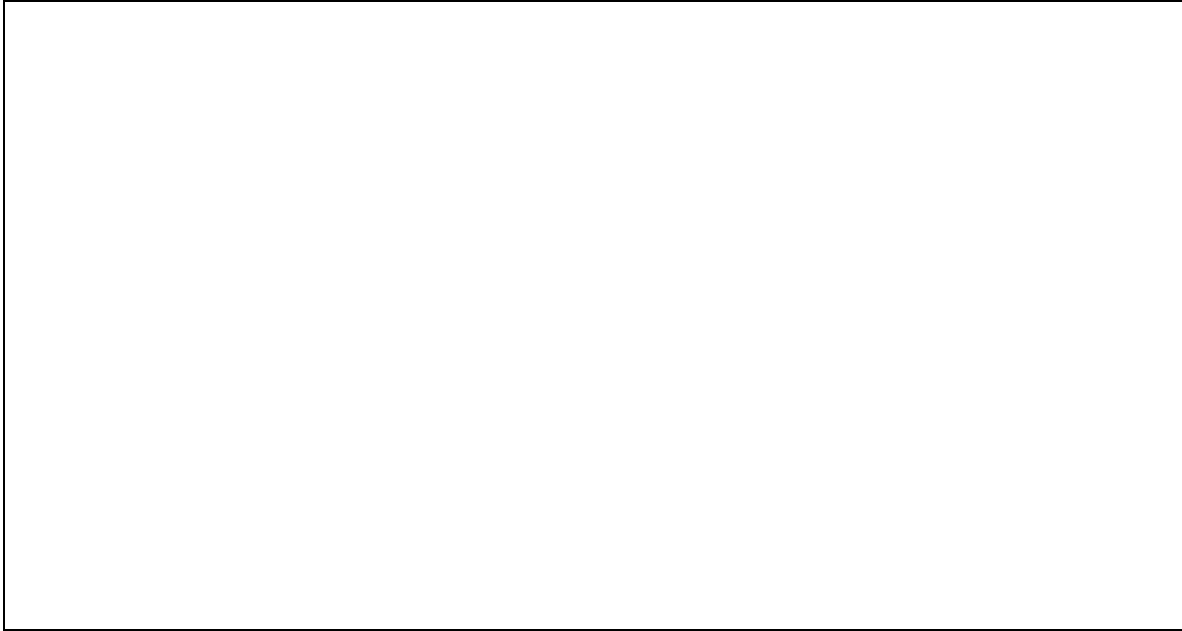
Considerations in this section (not requirements) include:

- a. *Does the project provide an overall economic benefit to West Virginia's agricultural and specialty crop industry?*
- b. *Does the project make good business sense and does it have a high likelihood of success?*
- c. *Are the expected benefits of the proposal proportionate with total investment?*
- d. *Does the project contribute to a positive image of West Virginia specialty crops and agriculture?*
- e. *Does the project provide educational benefits to the public about West Virginia specialty crops and agriculture?*
- f. *Does the project enhance capacity development, infrastructure, or create jobs?*

**3. Potential Impact-**Discuss the number of people or operations affected, the intended beneficiaries for the project and/or the potential economic impact if data from the project or a similar program is available. (One page or less)



**4. Goals-**Describe the overall goal(s) of the project in one or two sentences. If the project has multiple activities, be sure to specify goals for each activity and how they relate to the overall project effectiveness. (One page or less)




**5. Expected Measurable Outcomes-**Describe at least two distinct, quantifiable and measurable outcomes that directly and meaningfully support your project's purpose. Be sure to describe how you will measure your results. (One page or less)


Questions to be answered can include:

- a. How will success of the project be determined?*
- b. Can project benefits be measured, reported, and tracked over time?*
- c. What elements will be monitored or evaluated? By Whom? How often? How long?*
- d. Does the measurement define an event or condition that is external to the project and that is important to the identified beneficiaries, public and/or specialty crops industry in the state?*

**6. Work Plan-**Describe your proposal and its expected benefit to the West Virginia Specialty Crops industry. Explain how each goal and measurable outcome will be accomplished. Be clear about who will do the work. Include appropriate time lines. Outcomes may exceed the grant period; simply indicate that they exceed the grant period and what work will be ongoing. You must use month or range of months describing the activities or actions that will be conducted. (No more than one page)



**7. Project Commitment and Oversight-**Describe the partnerships, alliances, networks, or other collaborative efforts that would be created to implement this project. List all parties involved and describe what each contributes in skills and abilities to make this proposal succeed and work toward the goals and outcomes, as well as the commitments for each party (in-kind, monetary, labor, etc.) Describe who and how the project will be managed. (One page or less)





## SAMPLE BUDGET

Category	SCBGP	Cash	In-Kind	Total	Comments
Printing & design costs	\$3,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$5,000	10 hours @ \$20/hour by graphic designer; printing & delivery costs by XYZ printer (Wine directory)
Equipment lease/rental		\$500		\$500	Description of equipment needed and what component of project addressed
Supplies			\$500	\$500	What and by whom
Consultant	\$2,500			\$2,500	Consultant fee; describe what the consultant will do
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$5,500</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>	<b>\$8,500*</b>	

**Note: Total project costs may exceed \$10,000 but the column total for SCBGP funding may not request more than \$10,000**

**9. Signed Agreements Page-See Attached.**

**West Virginia Department of Agriculture  
FY2008 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program  
Application Agreement**

I/we the undersigned applicants, \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name/Names)  
of \_\_\_\_\_, West Virginia, hereby make  
(City/Cities)(please list county also)  
application for specialty crop block grant program funds, under the  
terms and conditions of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, in  
the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_. The total project cost is  
(Amount requested; should match the "totals" column on budget request)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Total project amount; should match the "totals" column on budget request)

The undersigned hereby warrant to the State of West Virginia that to the best of my/our knowledge, all information presented in this grant application is factual and true; that I/we understand that if this proposal is funded, I/we will be required to sign a grant agreement and other necessary documentation containing terms and conditions upon which funds will be released; and that I/we understand that I/we will be required to submit progress report(s) and a final report at the completion of the project as a condition to participating in this grant program.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Program Policies**

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals received;
- Request additional information on project proposals;
- Recommend partial funding for proposal that may be less than the full amount requested in the grant application; and
- Tie the release of project funds to completion of necessary progress reports and previous grant information.

## **Grant Proposal Review and Selection**

All application packets will be evaluated by the SCBGP-FB Evaluation Team after the grant application packet submittal deadline. The Evaluation Team will be made up of individuals designated by the Commissioner of Agriculture or his designee. Information from funded proposals will be used to create the State SCBGP submitted to USDA by the August 2009 deadline.

## **Notification of Award**

All eligible proposals will be reviewed. Successful proposals will be chosen on the merits of the project as they relate to the criteria specified in the Application Packet Requirements and will be included in the West Virginia State Plan which will be submitted to USDA AMS as soon as possible.

Applicants will be notified in writing if their project is not selected for inclusion in the West Virginia State Plan. Upon approval of the West Virginia State Plan by USDA AMS, applicants will be notified in writing as to whether or not they received a grant award.

Successful applicants will also be sent a Grant Award Agreement to sign and an invoice for check request. These documents will require grantees to agree to grant award conditions described in this manual and those dictated by West Virginia contracting requirements. Grant Award Agreements must be signed and returned to WVDA within 30 days of receipt. Failure to submit an executed copy of the Grant Award Agreement within 30 days of receipt will result in the loss of awarded grant funds, unless the delay was caused by circumstances outside the control of the grantee.

Grantees must be registered in the West Virginia FIMS system in order for payment to be issued.

***Please do not call the West Virginia Department of Agriculture to check the status of your application packet. Funded projects can not begin to accrue expenses until the State Plan and USDA AMS agreements are in place. You will not be able to be reimbursed for any expenditures until this date is determined.***

## SCBGPFB Checklist

**One original and two copies** of application packet printed on white paper and fastened with a paperclip in the upper left-hand corner.

Each containing:

Cover page and abstract

### **Project Proposal**

Project Purpose

Potential Impact

Goals

Expected Measurable Outcomes

Work Plan

Project Commitment and Oversight

Financial Feasibility-Detailed Budget

Signed Agreement Page

Supplemental Materials, Letters of Recommendations, etc.\*

Electronic version of grant email to WVDA ([cmartel@ag.state.wv.us](mailto:cmartel@ag.state.wv.us))

**\*Total project packet should not total more than 20 pages**