



State of Wisconsin  
Governor Scott Walker

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**Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection**  
Ben Brancel, Secretary

DATE: December 4, 2012

TO: Board of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection

FROM: Ben Brancel, Secretary *Ben Brancel*  
Mike Powers, Administrator, Division of Agricultural Development *M Powers*

SUBJECT: **Example Agricultural Development and Diversification Grant Award and Project Report**  
**Example Specialty Crop Block Grant Award and Project Report**

PRESENTED BY: Mike Bandli, Economic Development Consultant  
Juli Speck, Grants Specialist

RECOMMENDATION / REQUESTED ACTION: Information only

**SUMMARY / BACKGROUND:**

The Agricultural Development and Diversification Program was established by the state legislature in 1989 to provide grants for new and innovative approaches to increase agricultural productivity and profits. ADD Grants provided early stage funds for market research and development, new product research and development, and feasibility studies of new technologies and practices. The intent was to help identify and develop new profit centers and opportunities for farmers and agribusiness; and to provide information, programs and services that can result in increased income for farmers.

The Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) is administered by the Department, through grants provided by the United States Department of Agriculture, Agriculture Marketing Service. SCBG's are to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Specialty crops are defined as "fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture)." Grants are awarded for their outcomes within the specialty crop industry rather than a single organization, institution, or individual and require support and participation of industry project partners.

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## **HIGHLIGHTED PAST PROJECTS:**

### **Agricultural Development and Diversification:**

**23001 – 2008**

**A Commercial Demonstration of New Technologies for Producing Walleye and Hybrid Walleye for Stocking and Food Fish** (Amount Awarded: \$24,205) Jeff Malison, UW-Madison & UW-Stevens Point Northern Aquaculture Demonstration Facility (NADF)

- Built on previous basic research funded by UW- Sea Grant and North Central Regional Aquaculture Center and conducted by UW Madison, Iowa State University and Iowa DNR.
- Intense Wisconsin Aquaculture Industry interest of development of potential for walleye and hybrid walleyes as commercial aquaculture species.
- Project focused on applied research related to raising large walleye and hybrid walleye in a single growing season on commercial diets.
- Successfully raised hybrid walleyes and purebred walleyes to market size (3/4 – 1.0 lb.) in one year on pelleted commercial diets.
- Applied for and funded in a second phase in 2010 (#25007 – P.I. Greg Fischer, UW-SP NADF). Project focused on the development of commercial brood stock, refinement of grow out protocols and private fish farm evaluation of provided fingerlings.
- Phase two successfully provided fingerling walleyes and hybrids to private growers for evaluation in their systems. The project also successfully worked with cooperators to grow large, yearling fish for stocking into lakes.
- Consideration of a third phase project in 2011 (#26017) to fine tune the technical aspects of raising larval walleye or hybrids on a commercial scale and conduct an economic analysis of hybrid walleye grow-out. This project was not funded due to State budget lapse.

Grant participation has provided a foundation for UW-SP Northern Aquaculture Demonstration Facility (NADF) and cooperating growers to develop technologies for raising purebred and hybrid walleye for food fish and advanced stocking fish in a single growing season. Currently there are several Wisconsin fish farms raising purebred or hybrid walleyes commercially as a result of this research. One farm is Northside Enterprises (Dan Gruendemann) who earlier this year received a USDA-SBIR Grant to “evaluate high-tech culture strategies for purebred and hybrid walleye.”

Greg Fischer has presented the walleye research project at several national and international conferences, generating significant interest in saugeye intensive culture. He feels it is likely that we will see some large scale operations soon in Wisconsin.

## **HIGHLIGHTED PAST PROJECTS:**

### **Specialty Crop Block Grant:**

**Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) FY2011 10-016 and FY2011 11-015**

#### ***Evaluating soil moisture probes for water use efficiency in cranberry beds***

(Amount Awarded \$28,537 & \$27,500) Rebecca Harbut, Fruit Specialist, UW-Madison horticulture Dept.

- Study proposed and supported by Wisconsin Cranberry Growers Association due to strong interest in practical ways to successfully conserve water during cranberry production
- Initial 2010 SCBG was for a single year to evaluate the potential effectiveness of using soil moisture probes in cranberry beds to assist growers in determining timing and quantity of water needed for cranberry irrigation.
- A second year of study to validate the initial findings was granted for the 2011 SCBG cycle
- Research was done on grower cooperator farms
- Project partnered with researchers from Laval University in Quebec and William Bland at UW-Madison to leverage \$115,000 in additional labor and equipment to accomplish much more than was originally planned with this project
- Preliminary analysis indicates that use of soil moisture probes to maintain moisture levels led to a 60% reduction in water use with no negative impacts on crop health or production.
- This included the 2012 growing season with significant drought in much of the state
- Results were shared with 300 growers at the two field days and many growers were interested and indicated would consider installing soil moisture monitoring systems
- Also developed an on-line Evapotranspiration calculator for cranberry growers to use based on an existing program available to other crops

This project is one of 5 specialty crop grants involving the Wisconsin Cranberry Growers Association in increasing the sustainability of Wisconsin's cranberry production.