



**DEPARTMENT of AGRICULTURE
and NATURAL RESOURCES**

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South Dakota Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

FY2022 Request for Proposals

Key Information	
Amount Available	\$391,432.78
Applications Due	March 25, 2022, 11:59 PM Central Time
Who Can Apply	Non-Federal stakeholders in the South Dakota specialty crop industry, including State, Local, or Tribal governmental entities, nonprofit organizations, research institutions and institutions of higher education, for-profit businesses, and individual producers.
Proposal Submission Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application Cover Sheet • Project Profile Template (Word Format Submitted Electronically Only) including project and budget narratives • Unique Entity Identification number (UEI – replacing DUNS number) • Active SAM registration • Completed and signed W-9 • Completed and signed Federal Form SF 424B Assurances for Non-Construction Programs
Contact	Timothy Schoonhoven Grants and Loans Specialist Email: timothy.schoonhoven@state.sd.us Phone: 605-773-6690 Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources Resource Conservation & Forestry Division 523 E Capitol Ave Pierre, SD 57501

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1. About the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

a. Program Purpose

The purpose of the Fiscal Year 2022 South Dakota Specialty Crop Block Grant Program is to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops produced in South Dakota. This will be accomplished through projects that increase specialty crop consumption, production, purchasing, market access and food safety knowledge and processes, improve pest and disease control and environmental sustainability, contribute to new seed variety development, and expand specialty crop research and development.

b. Program Background

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is authorized to grant funds to State departments of agriculture through fiscal year 2023, for the purpose of enhancing the competitiveness specialty crops. Section 10107 of the [Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018](#) (2018 Farm Bill) amended the [public law text](#) to stipulate that state departments of agriculture can enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops:

- “(1) by leveraging efforts to market and promote specialty crops;
- “(2) by assisting producers with research and development relevant to specialty crops;
- “(3) by expanding availability and access to specialty crops;
- “(4) by addressing local, regional, and national challenges confronting specialty crop producers;
- and
- “(5) for such other purposes determined to be appropriate by the Secretary of Agriculture, in consultation with specialty crop stakeholders and relevant State departments of agriculture.”

The South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources (SD DANR) is responsible for administering the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) in South Dakota. In this role, each fiscal year SD DANR applies for Federal grant funds allocated to the state through USDA AMS, solicits project proposals from the South Dakota specialty crop industry, enters three-year project agreements for the performance of certain projects, and provides a state plan containing those projects to USDA AMS.

c. Definition of a Specialty Crop

The term ‘specialty crop’ means fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and horticulture and nursery crops (including floriculture). (7 U.S.C. 1621 note, amended under section 10010 of the Agricultural Act of 2014).

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service lists common specialty crops here:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp/specialty-crop>.

Proposals will not be funded if they:

- **Fail to directly address and demonstratively enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops,**
- **Focus on or primarily benefit ineligible crops, or**

- **Solely benefit a single producer, organization, or business.**

d. SCBG Program Definitions

Beginning Farmer or Rancher: an individual or entity that has not operated a farm or ranch for more than 10 years and substantially participates in the operation.

FY: Fiscal Year. This Request for Proposals will award funds for projects for FY2022, covering the project period of performance of September 30, 2022 – September 29, 2025.

Period of Performance: The three-year grant term for executing the activities associated with the grant. SD DANR is responsible for a three-year period of performance on the entire state grant allocation and accountable to USDA AMS for successful state program execution. Each subrecipient is accountable to SD DANR for project performance.

SCBG/SCBGP: The Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

SD DANR: The South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the State entity responsible for administering the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program in South Dakota.

Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher: a farmer or rancher who is a member of a Socially Disadvantaged Group. A "Socially Disadvantaged Group" is a group whose members have been subject to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

Subrecipient: The eligible entity that applies to the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources for funding to execute a project under the Specialty Crop Block Grant using South Dakota's Federal funding allocation. Subrecipients are responsible for complying with Federal SCBG Terms and Conditions issued by USDA AMS but contract directly with SD DANR for the duration of their project.

USDA AMS: The United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service agency. USDA AMS administers the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, issuing a federal funding opportunity each year that State departments of agriculture respond to in order to obtain their funding allocation to administer the program in their State. USDA AMS enters a grant agreement with SD DANR for each fiscal year Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.

e. Note on New Guidance for Fiscal Year 2022

Terms and Conditions: Effective October 2021, the Agricultural Marketing Service has implemented new [AMS General Terms and Conditions](#) that reflect changes to the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR §200), which the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources and its subrecipients with funded projects are obligated to meet.

Performance Measures: Beginning in Fiscal Year 2022, [AMS is instituting](#) a new set of [grant program performance measures](#) to evaluate Specialty Crop Block Grant project success. Applicants are **REQUIRED**

to select at least one performance outcome and associated measurable indicator as part of their project proposal.

2. Available Funding Award Information

a. Contingency Statement

The South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources requests proposals for projects to enhance the competitiveness of South Dakota specialty crops. This request from SD DANR is made contingent upon the availability of Federal funds from USDA AMS and the allocation of program funds from USDA AMS to SD DANR as the recipient. Upon such allocation SD DANR will then make available program funding for subrecipient projects in South Dakota.

b. Anticipated Funding Available for South Dakota Projects

Pending federal funding, South Dakota anticipates making available the State's FY22 allocation of \$391,432.78 for FY22 project awards. Previous year project awards ranged from \$5,000 - \$105,000. The average size of subrecipient award in FY21 was \$60,736.

Project budgets funded under the South Dakota Specialty Crop Block Grant Program are not capped at a specific level. The South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources reserves the right to offer subrecipient projects an award amount less than requested in the project proposal. Subrecipients may but are not required to contribute matching funds.

3. Eligible Applicants

This solicitation is open to non-Federal entities located in the state of South Dakota that are active participants or stakeholders in the South Dakota specialty crop industry. Examples of eligible applicants include State, Local, or Tribal governmental entities, nonprofit organizations, research institutions and institutions of higher education.

For-profit businesses and individual producers may apply. However, SD DANR will not fund projects that solely benefit an individual producer, business, or other applicant entity. Additionally, the USDA AMS Terms and Conditions prohibit subrecipient use of awarded funds to compete unfairly with companies that provide equivalent products or services.

4. Project Proposals

Past South Dakota Specialty Crop Block Grant awards can be viewed by year here:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp/awards>

a. Project Proposal Acceptability

Outreach and Specialty Crop Benefit: Projects must enhance the competitiveness of South Dakota specialty crops without exclusively benefitting a single individual, organization, or institution.

Subrecipients should incorporate clear outreach plans into their projects to disseminate results for the benefit of the broader South Dakota specialty crop industry.

Multi-State or Regional Projects: SD DANR may consider projects that collaborate across state lines or that will benefit the specialty crop industry beyond South Dakota, provided that the project focuses on South Dakota and the primary benefit accrues to the South Dakota specialty crop industry.

b. South Dakota Funding Priorities

South Dakota is prioritizing three of the [USDA AMS Outcomes for the FY22 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program](#) for proposals funded under this solicitation:

1. Increasing Access to Specialty Crops and Expanding Specialty Crop Production and Distribution
2. Increasing Consumption and Consumer Purchasing of Specialty Crops
3. Improve Environmental Sustainability of Specialty Crops

Proposals are welcome for projects working to accomplish any of the seven AMS outcomes below, and SD DANR encourages projects that meet as many of the outcomes and indicators as feasible. Projects that meet at least one of South Dakota’s three priority areas will receive additional consideration.

c. Outcomes

SD DANR will consider projects that address **AT LEAST ONE** of the USDA AMS Outcomes:

1. Increasing Consumption and Consumer Purchasing of Specialty Crops
2. Increasing Access to Specialty Crops and Expanding Specialty Crop Production and Distribution
3. Increase Food Safety Knowledge and Processes
4. Improve Pest and Disease Control Processes
5. Develop New Seed Varieties and Specialty Crops
6. Expand Specialty Crop Research and Development
7. Improve Environmental Sustainability of Specialty Crops

d. Indicators

Applicants **MUST** fill out the specific, measurable fields for **AT LEAST ONE** indicator for each outcome selected as part of the [Project Profile Template](#) submitted to SD DANR. Applicants must clearly explain how they will collect data to validate the measures detailed for each selected indicator. Program subrecipients are required to submit this information in [annual performance reports](#) to SD DANR.

For example, if a project selected Outcome 1 from the list above and committed to perform the first associated Indicator in order to verify the project met the Outcome, the submission might look like:

Outcome 1:	Increasing Consumption and Consumer Purchasing of Specialty Crops	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indicator 1.1	Total number of consumers who gained knowledge about specialty crops:	200.
1.1a	Adults	100.
1.1b	Children	100.

Project description of the data collection methods to validate these indicators would follow in the project profile template

Please see **Appendix A** for a full list of the Outcomes and Indicators, and find them on the USDA AMS website here: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/SCBGPPerformanceMeasures.pdf>.

All proposals submitted to SD DANR must include a filled-out copy of Appendix A with the project Outcome and Indicator selections.

e. Direct and Indirect costs

Direct costs are costs directly associated with execution of the objectives of the project and which would not be incurred apart from performance of the project. Direct costs are identified specifically with the project award and easily identified with a high degree of accuracy. Direct costs might include supplies, contracts, and travel directly benefiting the grant-supported project and compensation for employees performing the project activities.

Indirect costs are [described](#) in the USDA AMS Terms and Conditions as those costs that “represent the expenses of doing business that are not readily-identified with a particular grant, contract, project function or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization and the conduct of activities it performs.” Indirect costs, also known as facilities and administrative costs, might include clerical work and administrative staff compensation, general supplies, and building costs like utilities and phone or internet service. Proposed project budgets may include indirect costs.

Indirect costs are capped at 8% of the proposed project budget. The State of South Dakota is responsible for ensuring that indirect costs for all subrecipient projects funded under this RFP total less than or equal to a cumulative 8% of the State’s allocation from USDA AMS.

Please note that project budgets cannot propose to pay for an activity as both an indirect and direct cost; each budget item must either be a direct or indirect cost. See [2 CFR § 200.1](#) for definitions and [200.413](#) for more explanation of direct vs. indirect costs.

f. Cost-Share

Subrecipients are not required to provide cost-share or matching funds to supplement funds awarded by SD DANR through the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.

g. Allowable and Unallowable Costs

Subrecipients should consult the USDA AMS [Terms and Conditions](#) pages 9-15 and the [Federal Cost Principles at 2 CFR § 200 Part E](#) for guidance on whether various planned costs are allowable for a project funded through the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Generally, the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program **will not fund the following expenses:**

- Substituting SCBGP funds to pay for existing efforts or research already funded through other sources (“supplanting”)
- Paying off debt or fines and other penalties

- Capital expenditures for buildings, land, or general purpose equipment not used exclusively for technical project activities
- Alcohol and entertainment
- Fundraising, lobbying, or other political activities
- Promotional and marketing costs that create an unfair competitive advantage for the subrecipient over other members of the specialty crop industry

h. Project Expenditure Reimbursements and Pre-Award Costs

Project costs incurred by subrecipients will be paid as reimbursements by SD DANR. Reimbursement requests should be submitted on a **quarterly** basis throughout the course of the grant and must be accompanied by documentation of the costs incurred and the associated project work done.

Successful proposals may incur project costs within 90 days of entering a signed award agreement with SD DANR. Pre-award costs are only allowable if they would have been allowed during the project period of performance, and all pre-award costs the subrecipient wishes to receive reimbursement for must be included in the budget narrative submitted as part of the project proposal. South Dakota DANR will not reimburse subrecipients for costs incurred prior to the award agreement that are not included in the proposed budget, are not related to the documented objectives and activities of the project, are incurred over 90 days prior to execution of the signed agreement between DANR and the subrecipient (except with prior written approval) or are otherwise unallowable by AMS Terms and Conditions.

i. Panel Review of Applications

Project proposals will be reviewed by an impartial panel of experts. The panel will rank each project according to a set of evaluation criteria and recommend project selections to SD DANR.

5. FY22 Program Timeline

a. Period of Performance

The FY22 South Dakota Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Period of Performance is September 30, 2022, through September 29, 2025. **Applications are due March 25, 2022.**

b. Timeline

Program Activity	Party	Timeframe
<i>Project Solicitation and Selection (2022)</i>		
Release of Federal funding opportunity for states	USDA AMS	January 25, 2022
Release of Request for Proposals	South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources	February 2022
Questions about the SCBG opportunity received	SD DANR	February-March 2022

Submissions due for FY22 proposals	Subrecipient Applicants	March 25, 2022
Proposals screened for completeness	SD DANR	Early April 2022
Proposals reviewed, evaluated, and ranked for selection, including requests for additional information from applicants if desired	Expert Review Panel	Mid-late April 2022
Proposals selected for inclusion in South Dakota Specialty Crop Block Grant state plan for FY22	Expert Review Panel	By end of April 2022
Notification of subrecipients of selection conditional on USDA AMS review	SD DANR	May 2022
South Dakota state plan submitted to USDA AMS	SD DANR	May 3, 2022
Finalization of state plan	SD DANR and USDA AMS	May-September 2022
Announcement of FY22 SCBG Projects	USDA AMS	Fall 2022
Announcement of FY22 South Dakota Projects	SD DANR	Fall 2022
Execution of state plan by entering signed agreements between the State of South Dakota and each subrecipient	SD DANR, Accepted Subrecipient Applicants	September-October, 2022
Project Activities Begin	Accepted Subrecipient Applicants	October-November 2022 (no earlier than September 30, 2022)
Project Performance Period (2022-2025)		
Year 1 Annual Performance Reports Due	Subrecipients	November 15, 2023
Site Visits and Monitoring <i>*Timing and method could be impacted by COVID-19.</i>	SD DANR	Any time during the performance period
Year 2 Annual Performance Reports Due	Subrecipients	November 15, 2024
Submission of all final invoices	Subrecipients	October 31, 2025
Year 3 Final Report – Encompasses all project activity	Subrecipients	November 15, 2025
Close of FY22 Specialty Crop Block Grant program	SD DANR and USDA AMS	January 2026

c. Reporting

Recipients are required to submit an annual performance report to account for their project activities and financial expenditures during that reporting period. Annual performance reports can be found here: [Performance Report Annual Template \(docx\)](#). **Annual performance reports are due November 15.**

Additionally, subrecipients should submit quarterly reimbursement reports to DANR each year at the following intervals:

Quarterly Reimbursement Reporting Period	Reimbursement Due Date
July 1 – September 30	October 31

October 1 – December 31	January 31
January 1 – March 31	April 30
April 1 – June 30	July 31

The reimbursement report and request form, along with application documents, can be accessed at the DANR website here: <https://danr.sd.gov/Conservation/SpecialtyCropBlockGrant/default.aspx>

6. Application Submission Requirements

Applications for funding under the South Dakota Specialty Crop Block Grant Program **must include**:

- Application Cover Sheet
- Project Profile Template – Includes Project Title, Applicant Organization, Project Narrative, Project Objectives the Applicant wishes to achieve, Project Outcomes and measurable Indicators to evaluate project success, Budget Narrative and Justification
- Federal SF-424B form: Assurances for Non-Construction Programs
<https://danr.sd.gov/Conservation/SpecialtyCropBlockGrant/docs/Assurances.pdf>
- W-9 Form
- Optional: Documentation of external partner involvement if desired, e.g., letters of support

Applicants will need:

- Tax ID number or Social Security Number
- Active registration with SAM.gov
- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) – Applicants can access SAM.gov to view their existing DUNS number and receive the new UEI. By April 4, 2022, the federal government will stop using the DUNS number to uniquely identify entities. At that point, entities doing business with the federal government will use a Unique Entity Identifier created in SAM.gov. If your entity is registered in SAM.gov today, your Unique Entity ID (SAM) has already been assigned and is viewable in SAM.gov. This includes inactive registrations. The Unique Entity ID is currently located below the DUNS Number on your entity registration record. For more information see:
 - o U.S. General Services Administration “Unique Entity Identifier Update”:
<https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/federal-acquisition-service/office-of-systems-management/integrated-award-environment-iae/iae-systems-information-kit/unique-entity-identifier-update>
 - o GSA, “What do I need to know about the new Unique Entity ID in SAM.gov?” blog about the updated system: <https://interact.gsa.gov/blog/what-do-i-need-know-about-new-unique-entity-id-samgov>
 - o SAM.gov DUNS to UEI Transition FAQ: <https://sam.gov/content/duns-uei>
 - o For a guide on how to view your Unique Entity ID (SAM) click [here](#).

Appendix A. Outcomes and Indicators Worksheet

The Specialty Crop Block Grant Program project outcomes and indicators are updated for FY22:
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/SCBGPPerformanceMeasures.pdf>.

- **Please use this list to select at least one Outcome and at least one Indicator beneath that Outcome for your project. Proposals ([See link: Project Profile Template FY22](#)) must include this information when submitted to SD DANR.**

Outcome 1: Increasing Consumption and Consumer Purchasing of Specialty Crops

- 1.1 Total number of consumers who gained knowledge about specialty crops ____.
 - 1.1a Adults ____.
 - 1.1b Children ____.
- 1.2 Total number of consumers who consumed more specialty crops ____.
 - 1.2a Adults ____.
 - 1.2b Children ____.
- 1.3 Number of additional specialty crop customers counted ____.
- 1.4 Number of additional business transactions executed ____.
- 1.5 Increased sales measured in:
 - 1.5a Dollars ____.
 - 1.5b Percent change ____.
 - 1.5c Combination of volume and average price as a result of enhanced marketing activities ____.

Outcome 2: Increasing Access to Specialty Crops and Expanding Specialty Crop Production and Distribution

- 2.1 Number of stakeholders that gained technical knowledge about producing, preparing, procuring, and/or accessing specialty crops ____.
- 2.2 Number of stakeholders that reported producing, preparing, procuring, and/or accessing more specialty crops ____.
- 2.3 Total number of market access points for specialty crops developed or expanded ____ . Of those:
 - 2.3a Number of new online portals created to sell specialty crops ____.

2.3b Number with expanded seasonal availability ____.

2.3c Number of existing market access points that expanded specialty crop offerings ____.

2.3d Number of new market access points that established specialty crop offerings ____.

2.4 Number of stakeholders that gained knowledge about more efficient and effective distribution systems ____.

2.5 Number of stakeholders that adopted best practices or new technologies to improve distribution systems ____.

2.6 Total number of partnerships established between producers, distributors, and/or other relevant intermediaries related to distribution systems _____. Of those established:

2.6a Number formalized with written agreements (i.e. MOU's, signed contracts, etc.) ____.

2.6b Number of partnerships with underserved organizations ____.

2.7 Total number of new/improved distribution systems developed _____. Of those, the number that:

2.7a Stemmed from new partnerships ____.

2.7b Increased efficiency ____.

2.7c reduced costs ____.

2.7d Increased specialty crop grower participation ____.

2.7e Expanded customer reach ____.

2.7f Increased online presence ____.

2.8 Number of specialty crop-related jobs:

2.8a Created ____.

2.8b Maintained ____.

2.9 Total number of new individuals who went into specialty crop production as a result of marketing _____. Of those, the number who are:

2.9a Beginning farmers or ranchers ____.

2.9b Socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers ____.

2.10 Number of market access points that reported increased:

2.10a Revenue ____.

2.10b Sales ____.

2.10c Cost-savings ____.

Outcome 3: Increase Food Safety Knowledge and Processes

3.1 Number of stakeholders that gained knowledge about prevention, detection, control, and/or intervention food safety practices, including relevant regulations (to improve their ability to comply with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and/or meet the standards for aligned third party food safety audits such as Harmonized GAP/GHP) ____.

3.2 Number of stakeholders that:

3.2a Established a food safety plan ____.

3.2b Revised or updated their food safety plan ____.

3.3 Number of specialty crop stakeholders who implemented new/improved prevention, detection, control, and intervention practices, tools, or technologies to mitigate food safety risks (to improve their ability to comply with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and/or meet the standards for aligned third party food safety audits such as Harmonized GAP/GHP) ____.

3.4 Number of prevention, detection, control, or intervention practices developed or enhanced to mitigate food safety risks ____.

3.5 Number of stakeholders that used grant funds to:

3.5a Purchase ____.

3.5b Upgrade food safety equipment ____.

Outcome 4: Improve Pest and Disease Control Processes

4.1 Number of stakeholders that gained knowledge about science-based tools to combat pests and diseases ____.

4.2 Number of stakeholders that adopted pest and disease control best practices, technologies, or innovations ____.

4.3 Number of stakeholders trained in early detection and rapid response practices to combat pests and diseases _____. Of those:

4.3a the number of additional acres managed using integrated pest management ____.

4.4 Number of stakeholders that implemented new diagnostic systems, methods, or technologies for analyzing specialty crop pests and diseases ____.

4.5 Total number of producers/processors that enhanced or maintained pest and disease control practices _____. Of those, the number that reported:

4.5a Reduction in product lost to pest and diseases ____.

4.5b Improved crop quality ____.

4.5c Reduction in labor costs ____.

4.5d Reduction in pesticide use ____.

4.6 Number of producers/processors improving the efficiency of pest and disease control diagnostics and response testing, as reported by:

4.6a Improving speed ____.

4.6b Improving reliability ____.

4.6c Expanding capability ____.

4.6d Increasing testing (i.e. survey work for pests) ____.

Outcome 5: Develop New Seed Varieties and Specialty Crops

5.1 Number of cultivar and/or variety trials conducted _____. Of those:

5.1a The number that advanced to further stages of development _____.

5.2 Number of cultivars and/or seed varieties developed _____.

5.3 Number of cultivars and/or seed varieties released _____.

5.4 Number of growers adopting new cultivars and/or varieties _____.

5.5 Number of acres planted with new cultivars and/or varieties _____.

Outcome 6: Expand Specialty Crop Research and Development

6.1 Number of research goals accomplished _____.

6.2 For research conclusions, the number that:

6.2a Yielded findings that supported continued research _____.

6.2b Yielded findings that led to completion of study _____.

6.2c Yielded findings that allow for implementation of new practice, process or technology _____.

6.3 Number of industry representatives and other stakeholders who engaged with research results _____.

6.4 Total number of research outputs published to industry publications and/or academic journals _____. For each published research output, the:

6.4a Number of views/reads of published research/data _____.

6.4b Number of citations counted _____.

Outcome 7: Improve Environmental Sustainability of Specialty Crops

7.1 Number of stakeholders that gained knowledge about environmental sustainability best practices, tools, or technologies ____.

7.2 Number of stakeholders reported with an intent to adopt environmental sustainability best practices, tools, or technologies ____.

7.3 Number of producers that adopted environmental best practices or tools ____.

7.4 Number of new tools/technologies developed or enhanced to improve sustainability/conservation or other environmental outcomes ____.

7.5 Number of additional acres managed with sustainable practices, tools, or technologies that focused on:

7.5a Water quality/ conservation ____.

7.5b Soil health ____.

7.5c Biodiversity ____.

7.5d Reduction in energy use ____.

7.5e Other positive environmental outcomes (optional) ____.

7.6 Number of additional acres established and maintained for the mutual benefit of pollinators/specialty crops ____.