

## MARKET DEVELOPMENT EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE COST SHARE PROGRAM

# Participant Application

---

### OVERVIEW

The SC Specialty Crop Growers Association is partnering with the SC Department of Agriculture (SCDA) to promote the specialty crop industry through a cost share program that will assist growers in attending domestic industry trade show and educational conferences. Attendance at various trade shows and conferences will equip South Carolina's specialty crop growers with the latest and most current research based educational information on topics such as pest management, sustainability, production practices, food safety, and regulatory issues, which are essential in expanding the specialty crop industry.

Through funding from the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant, this cost share program will cover 50% of registration fees for attending a specialty crop-focused educational conference for up to 2 growers per company. The cost share will not cover costs of merchandise, travel, food, or lodging. Please submit the information below to apply for reimbursement. Reimbursements are available on a first come first serve basis until funds are depleted. A farm may submit their application and primary source receipts after each event or following the end of the conference season.

### FOR REIMBURSEMENT, THE FOLLOWING IS REQUIRED:

- Must be a South Carolina farmer and grow specialty crops. The USDA defines specialty crops as “fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture)”.
- Provide primary source receipts for educational conference registration.
- Provide data, information, statistics, and/or testimonials at checkpoints throughout the duration of this program for tracking purposes. Information will only be shared with SCDA.

### GRADUATION RULE:

Growers cannot exceed more than two consecutive years in the program, although they can reapply after one year hiatus.

## APPROVED EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCES

At this time the events named below are the only shows approved by SCDA for the Market Development Educational Conference Cost Share Program, though growers may submit an event for consideration.

### Carolina Farm Stewardship Association Sustainable Agriculture Conference

**Date:** November 2 – 4, 2024

**Location:** Durham, NC

**Estimated Attendance:** 1,000

**Key Players:** Regional growers and farmers, experts in the fields of food safety/marketing/policy/organics/sustainability, regional retail buyers and food service

**Cost to Attend:** \$375

**Max Reimbursement:** \$187.50

*\*Up to two registrations per company*

**More Info:** [carolinafarmstewards.org/sustainable-agriculture-conference](http://carolinafarmstewards.org/sustainable-agriculture-conference)

### Southeast Vegetable & Fruit Expo

**Date:** December 3 – 4, 2024

**Location:** Myrtle Beach, SC

**Estimated Attendance:** 1,000

**Key Players:** Organizations and businesses in the food, packaging, and sustainability industries, interested in exploring collaborations, solutions, and innovative thinking throughout the value chain

**Cost to Attend:** \$180

**Max Reimbursement:** \$90

*\*Up to \$47.50 for one other registration*

**More Info:** [ncvga.com](http://ncvga.com)

### Southeast Regional Fruit and Vegetable Conference

**Date:** January 9 – 11, 2025

**Location:** Savannah, GA

**Estimated Attendance:** 3,500

**Key Players:** Fruit and veg growers from across the country, experts in the field of specialty crop agriculture, extension agents, technology, food safety, marketing, science, buyers, agriculture suppliers for seeds, fertilizer, equipment, etc.

**Cost to Attend:** \$275

**Max Reimbursement:** \$137.50

*\*Up to two registrations per company*

**More Info:** [seregionalconference.org](http://seregionalconference.org)

### Clemson FRESH Food, Packaging, & Sustainability Summit

**Date:** March 3 – 5, 2025

**Location:** Clemson, SC

**Estimated Attendance:** 1,000

**Key Players:** Organizations and businesses in the food, packaging, and sustainability industries, interested in exploring collaborations, solutions, and innovative thinking throughout the value chain.

**Cost to Attend:** \$549

**Max Reimbursement:** \$274.50

*\*Up to two registrations per company*

**More Info:** [sonocofreshsummit.com](http://sonocofreshsummit.com)

### Association of Specialty Cut Flower Growers: Southeast Regional Conference

**Date:** October 8 – 9, 2025

**Location:** Chapel Hill, NC

**Estimated Attendance:** 150

**Key Players:** Regional growers and farmers of cut flowers

**Cost to Attend:** \$485

**Max Reimbursement:** \$242.50

**More Info:** [ascfg.org/event/ascfg-southeast-regional-conference](http://ascfg.org/event/ascfg-southeast-regional-conference)

### Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project: Business of Farming Conference

**Date:** TBD

**Location:** TBD

**Estimated Attendance:** 700

**Key Players:** Regional growers and farmers, experts in the fields of food safety/marketing/policy/organics/sustainability, regional retail buyers and food service

**Cost to Attend:** \$95

**Max Reimbursement:** \$47.50

**More Info:** [asapconnections.org/farmer-resources/business-of-farming-conference](http://asapconnections.org/farmer-resources/business-of-farming-conference)

# APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Farm Name \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

*If different from above*

Phone Number(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

State Vendor Registration Number \_\_\_\_\_

*Each company requesting reimbursement must obtain a State of SC Vendor Number. This process is free and can be completed at [procurement.sc.gov/doing-biz/registration](http://procurement.sc.gov/doing-biz/registration).*

## Conferences Attended

*Grower must attend the event to receive reimbursement. Reimbursements will be awarded based on the number of applications received and available funding.*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project:<br>Business of Farming Conference | <input type="checkbox"/> Clemson FRESH Food, Packaging, & Sustainability Summit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Association of Specialty Cut Flower Growers:<br>Southeast Regional Conference  | <input type="checkbox"/> Southeast Vegetable & Fruit Expo                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carolina Farm Stewardship Association Sustainable Agriculture<br>Conference    | <input type="checkbox"/> Southeast Regional Fruit and Vegetable Conference      |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____   |

## Recommend an Event

*If you attended a conference that will help bring value to South Carolina's Specialty Crop Industry, let us know about it. We will review it and potentially approve it for you to receive a reimbursement.*

Event Name \_\_\_\_\_

Event Date \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

**Write a brief statement about how the event will help your farm develop the specialty crop industry.**

Are you a member of the SC Specialty Crop Growers Association?  Yes  No *SCSCGA members may be given preference.*

List of Specialty Crops Grown \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Gross Annual Farm Sales \_\_\_\_\_ *This data will only be used to meet USDA Grant Objectives.*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION TO

Anne Nidiffer, SCDA Marketing Specialist  
South Carolina Department of Agriculture  
PO Box 11280, Columbia, SC 29211  
[anidiffer@scda.sc.gov](mailto:anidiffer@scda.sc.gov)

*Save this form to your computer first before submitting.  
Do not submit from an internet browser.*

### SCDA GRANTS ADMINISTRATION USE ONLY

Approved  Not Approved

Amount to Pay \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized By \_\_\_\_\_

