



Craig McNamara
Board President
Owner, Sierra Orchards

June 5, 2017

Joshua Eddy
Executive Director

The Honorable Karen Ross
California Department of Food and Agriculture
1220 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Ashley Boren
Executive Director,
Sustainable Conservation

Donald Bransford, Owner
Bransford Farms

Dear Secretary Ross:

Don Cameron,
General Manager,
Terranova Ranch, Inc.

California's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program has been of great value to the farmers of our state in increasing the overall competitiveness of the specialty crop sector. The priorities that you have chosen for the program— Market Enhancement; Training and Education; and Research have been instrumental in focusing efforts of the program to key areas of importance.

Nancy Casady
General Manager
Ocean Beach People's
Organic Food Co-Op

At our recent meeting of the State Board, we had the opportunity to hear from the Buy California Marketing Agreement (CA GROWN), CDFA's Office of Farm to Fork and the Center of Ecoliteracy on the activities they are implementing as part of the SCBGP. We found these initiatives and programs to be informative and well as appropriate for enhancing competitiveness of the specialty crop industry.

Helene Dillard, Dean
College of Agricultural
and Environmental
Sciences at the
University of California,
Davis

Over the last seven years, this Board has had the opportunity to hear about the SCBGP on several occasions. Not only from CDFA on overall metrics and reporting, but also from several recipients of SCBGP funds. We believe that SCBGP funds should directly benefit growers, fill needs within the specialty crop sector and expand marketing, education and research.

Bennet Drake, President
Drake Enterprises

Michael Gallo, Co-owner
Joseph Gallo Farms

Eric Holst,
Senior Director,
Environmental Defense
Fund

Our recent update of the Ag Vision highlighted the need for outreach and communication to build relationships with retailers, foodservice buyers and other institutions to act as a conduit of information on farmers, as well as farming practices, to consumers. The SCBGP is a key opportunity CDFA has to provide incentives and support to specialty crop growers and stakeholders to fill this needed void. As a Board we support an increase in SCBGP priority funding to support initiatives like CA Grown and 'California Thursdays' that build relationships and foster communications between the farm community and consumers.

Bryce Lundberg,
Vice President,
Lundberg Family Farms

Martha Montoya,
President,
Los Kitos Produce

Joy Sterling, CEO
Iron Horse Vineyards

Thank you for continued leadership and dedication to California's farmers and ranchers.

Best regards,

Craig McNamara
President

