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Blue Valley Times

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Attention Farmers: Apply Now for Specialty Crop Block Grants

By State Rep. Joe Emrick

BANGOR - The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture is inviting proposals for the Commonwealth Specialty Crop Block Grant program.

Eligible projects will stimulate market growth and enhance the competitive position of crops designated as high priority for their potential to feed Pennsylvania's economy and boost environmental sustainability. Eligible high-priority crops include hemp, hops, hardwoods, honey; and barley, rye and wheat for distilling, brewing and malting. Click here to review grant guidelines.

A percentage of funds will be designated to projects in rural communities with at least 20% of the population below the federal poverty line.

Proposals must be submitted through the Department of Community and Economic Development's Electronic Single Application. Applicants with questions about eligible projects or procedures should email Morgan Sheffield, the department's grants manager, at msheffield@pa.gov.



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Let's Work TOGETHER to Finally Beat the Opioid Epidemic

By State Rep. Joe Emrick

BANGOR - Rest assured the General Assembly remains 100% committed to battling this epidemic that has taken so many lives, but



given the increase in opioid-related deaths and the number of Pennsylvanians with drug abuse disorders, it's clear the disaster declaration has not resulted in the kind of change we need to truly help people recover from this disease.

The opioid disaster declaration that's been renewed 15 times by Gov. Tom Wolf for well over three years will expire effective Aug. 26, per the recently approved constitutional amendment that limits disaster declarations to a maximum of 21 days without legislative approval.

The governor has also acknowledged that many of the changes affected by the disaster declaration are now addressed through other executive branch actions. It's time for the governor and the General Assembly to work TOGETHER on this public health crisis so we can save lives and help our citizens truly recover from their addiction.