Florida A&M University Cooperative Extension Programs has initiated a project, with funding from USDA and Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, that focuses on specialty crop enterprises that will enhance farm profits and marketing success for small-scale specialty crop producers.

Small-scale agricultural operations can benefit from diversification to specialty crop enterprises. These operations can also facilitate the development of alternative farming systems and expanding marketing opportunities. Developing specialty crop enterprises can result in increased income-generating potential for small-scale farm operations in north Florida.

The two-year project began in 2009 and encompasses on-station and on-farm training demonstrations to evaluate production capabilities for small-scale, specialty crop producers, including variety selection, production and harvesting practices, production scheduling, irrigation and water management, post-harvest handling and value-added processing. Marketing, value-added processing and distribution training demonstrations are also conducted to evaluate human, capital, and equipment needs, as well as production and distribution costs.

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