

## VALUE-ADDED GRANT OPPORTUNITY

By Jim Bardenhagen, Leelanau MSU Extension

The Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) has just announced the call for proposals to get a Julian-Stille Value-Added Grant (also called “Agricultural Innovation Fund”). The deadline for proposals is June 1, 2006.

Individuals, farmer-owned cooperatives, partnerships, limited liability companies, private or public corporations and local units of government are all eligible.

They are looking for proposals to establish, retain, expand, attract, or develop value-added ag products and ag processing in Michigan.

Grants can be obtained for several categories: Technical Assistance, Innovative Technology, Feasibility Studies; Business Plan Development; Market Research; Facility Improvements; Facility/Land Purchase or Construction.

The grants do require 10% matching funds. The grant limits range from \$25,000 to \$350,000 depending on the category with \$10 million available overall.

This is a great opportunity to receive some funding for various aspects of developing a value added product or venture.

In order to learn more about these grants, MDA has scheduled **2 grant writing workshops** in the NW Michigan area. The **first is on March 2nd from 2 to 4 pm at the Crystal Mountain Resort** in Thompsonville. The **second is on March 3<sup>rd</sup> from 10:30 am to 2 pm at the Grand Traverse Government Center** in Traverse City.

You can go to [www.michigan.gov/mda](http://www.michigan.gov/mda) or call 517-241-2178 for full grant proposal information. Locally you can also contact Jim Bardenhagen, an ag innovator with the MSU Product Center (231-256-9888) regarding the grants.