

Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program – National Integrated Food Safety Initiative

FY 2008 Request for Applications

Application Deadline:

January 11, 2008

**For Special Emphasis Grants Only,
Letter of Intent Deadline:**

December 7, 2007



U.S. Department of Agriculture



Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

**COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE;
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program – National Integrated Food Safety Initiative

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.303, Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program.

DATES: Applications must be received by Grants.gov by close of business (COB) on January 11, 2008 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding. Applicants submitting special emphasis grant applications (see Part I, B., 2.(b)) are strongly encouraged to submit letters of intent via e-mail by December 7, 2007. Comments regarding this Request for Applications (RFA) are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is requesting comments regarding this RFA from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the program. Such comments will be used to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current RFA from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education and extension for use in formulating future RFAs for competitive programs. Comments should be submitted by the deadline provided in the **DATES** portion of this Notice.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy, Oversight, and Funds Management Staff; Office of Extramural Programs; USDA-CSREES; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: RFP-OEP@csrees.usda.gov. (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program – National Integrated Food Safety Initiative RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CSREES requests applications for the Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program – National Integrated Food Safety Initiative for fiscal year (FY) 2008 to support integrated, multifunctional agricultural research, extension, and education activities that address food safety priorities in the United States. It is anticipated that approximately \$12.7 million will be made available for support of this program in FY 2008.

This notice identifies the objectives for the Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program – National Integrated Food Safety Initiative projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for an Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program –

National Integrated Food Safety Initiative (hereafter referred to as National Integrated Food Safety Initiative) grant. CSREES additionally requests stakeholder input from any interested party for use in the development of the next RFA for this program.

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

Section 406 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) (7 U.S.C. 7626) authorized the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a research, education, and extension competitive grants program to provide funding for integrated, multifunctional agricultural research, extension, and education activities. Subject to the availability of appropriations to carry out this program, the Secretary may award grants to colleges and universities (as defined by section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) (7 U.S.C. 3103)) on a competitive basis for integrated research, education, and extension projects. Grants are to be awarded to address priorities in United States agriculture that involve integrated research, education, and extension activities as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board (NAREEEAB). Section 7206 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 amended section 406(b) of AREERA to add the 1994 Land-Grant Institutions as eligible to apply for grants under this authority.

CSREES will administer the Integrated Research, Education and Extension Competitive Grants Program by determining priorities in U.S. agriculture through Agency stakeholder input processes in consultation with the NAREEEAB. Each RFA will be developed each fiscal year based on these established priorities and approaches to solving the critical agricultural issues. While the overall approach to solving critical agricultural issues, priorities, or problems will be through an integration of research, education, and extension activities within each individual program, component RFAs, depending on the priority addressed, may request applications that are research, education, or extension only, or a combination thereof.

In June 2003, CSREES and the Agricultural Research Service hosted a national Stakeholder Listening Session on Food Safety Research Priorities in Denver, Colorado. Industry, university, consumer, and Federal stakeholders presented their top five food safety priorities through year 2008 in an open forum. Where appropriate, identified food safety priorities were incorporated into the FY 2008 RFA. In April 2007 all individuals on the competitive review panel for the National Integrated Food Safety Initiative were given the opportunity to provide stakeholder input on the FY 2008 RFA, the competitive process, and the panel proceedings. Their comments and suggestions were incorporated into the FY 2008 RFA. In addition, stakeholder input from all interested parties was solicited with the release of the FY 2007 RFA for the National Integrated Food Safety Initiative. This ongoing process will be repeated with the release of the FY 2008 RFA. In July 2006, Project Directors for National Integrated Food Safety Initiative grants from FY 2000-2005 met in Washington to present their research results and to participate in roundtable discussions with National Program Leaders at CSREES. Where appropriate, results of the roundtable discussions were incorporated into the FY 2008 RFA. Lastly, in May 2007, federal food safety partners from the Food and Drug Administration, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Agricultural Research Service, Agricultural Marketing Service, the Food and Nutrition Service, and the Department of Homeland Security met with CSREES for a full-day planning meeting to discuss food safety priorities across the federal food safety system. Where appropriate, recommendations from the planning group were incorporated into the FY 2008 RFA.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The purpose of the National Integrated Food Safety Initiative is to support food safety projects that demonstrate an integrated approach (as defined in Part VIII, E.) to solving problems in applied food safety research, education, or extension. The National Integrated Food Safety Initiative requests integrated research, education, and extension applications that address a broad spectrum of food safety concerns – from on-farm production, post-harvest processing, and distribution, to food selection, preparation, and consumption. Various models for integration of applied research, education, and extension will be considered for funding. Applications describing multi-state, multi-institutional, multidisciplinary, and multifunctional activities (and combinations thereof) are encouraged. A single university may apply for a grant, but the university must demonstrate significant collaboration with various agencies or organizations within the host state. Applicants are strongly encouraged to assemble project teams that include those with expertise in research, extension, and/or education. All members of the project team should be involved in the development and writing of the application. For tips on developing integrated grant applications, applicants may visit <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/pdfs/tipsheet.pdf> on the web.

The National Integrated Food Safety Initiative creates opportunities for new collaborations between individuals and institutions in an effort to address problems in new ways and/or improve communication with high risk, under-served, or hard-to-reach audiences. In order to fully realize these potential benefits, CSREES strongly encourages applicants to develop applications describing integrated activities that include collaboration with 1890 Land-Grant Institutions, 1994 Land-Grant Institutions, Hispanic-serving institutions, and/or other institutions that serve high risk, under-served, or hard-to-reach populations. Collaborations with local, state, and/or Federal governments, professional associations, public or private organizations, and/or international entities are also strongly encouraged.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to address at least two of the three functional areas of research, education, and extension (i.e., research and extension, research and education, or extension and education). Applications that focus on one functional area (i.e., research only, education only, or extension only) will also be considered for funding, but only if they: (1) provide a strong rationale for the limited focus; and (2) explain clearly how addressing that separate functional area will meet the overall goal of a total integrated, multifunctional research, education, and extension approach (as defined in Part VIII, E.). A focus has been prescribed for each function or component of the National Integrated Food Safety Initiative:

1. Scope of Projects

(a) Research. The research component will focus on applied food safety research. The outcome of the applied research should enable extension and/or education personnel in applying the results of the research to solving food safety problems and/or enhancing educational curricula in food safety. Basic research will be considered for funding only under special circumstances for which adequate justification has been provided. In addition to traditional laboratory and field research, applied research may include educational research, behavioral or social research, and/or research focused on defining the behavioral determinants of food safety practices.

(b) **Education.** The education component will address food safety education and training implemented in a formal classroom setting. This may include elementary, secondary, undergraduate, or graduate education.

All educational interventions **must include a referenced research base** that fully justifies the choice of the intervention, and provides a rationale for the selection of the specific target audience(s). **All educational interventions must also include an evaluation of the effectiveness of the educational intervention in accomplishing intended objectives (e.g., improving knowledge, changing behavior, attitudes, or perceptions). Where possible, applicants should include a sample protocol of their evaluation instrument(s).**

(c) **Extension.** The extension component will address food safety education and training implemented in a non-formal setting. Where there is no extension program, outreach activities that deliver science-based knowledge and informational education to people in a variety of non-formal settings are an acceptable substitute. In addition to education and training, extension components may include the development and distribution of educational materials such as pamphlets, fliers, fact sheets, training curricula, videotapes, audiotapes, CD ROMS, interactive software, website development, and a variety of other audiovisual and print media.

All extension interventions **must include a referenced research base** that fully justifies the choice of the intervention, and provides a rationale for the selection of the specific target audience(s). **All extension interventions must also include an evaluation of the effectiveness of the extension intervention in accomplishing intended objectives.** If the extension intervention is primarily focused on the distribution of educational materials, audio-visual, or other print media, the application must include: (a) an evaluation of the effectiveness of the distribution mechanism(s); and/or (b) an evaluation of the effectiveness of the materials in accomplishing their intended objective(s) (e.g., improving knowledge, changing behavior, attitudes, or perceptions). The focus should be on behavior change or adoption of safe practices, rather than on information dissemination. . **Where possible, applicants should include a sample protocol of their evaluation instruments(s).**

2. Applied Priority Areas for Fiscal Year 2008

(a) **Standard Grants.** Two types of standard grants will be awarded in FY 2008. Standard grants for a maximum of \$600,000 for up to 3 years will be awarded. In addition, larger standard grants entitled “**special emphasis grants**” may be awarded for a maximum of \$2 million per award for up to 4 years (total award, not per year).

Applied priority areas have been established for applications seeking standard grants for a maximum of \$600,000 for up to 3 years (described in Part II, C., 1.). These include the following:

- (111.A) Providing food safety education and training for consumers of all ages, including those at increased risk for foodborne illnesses**

- (111.B) Providing food safety education, training, and certification for farmers, industry, and retail, including small farm direct-food-sales vendors and processors**
- (111.C) Improving the safety of fresh and fresh-cut fruits and vegetables**
- (111.D) Filling knowledge gaps about sources and persistence of microbial pathogens in meat, poultry, dairy, and fish, and applying control measures for reducing those pathogens**
- (111.E) Applying new or improved food processing technologies and monitoring their impact on food safety**
- (111.F) Strengthening the nation’s food defense system through threat prevention, threat response, risk management, risk communication, and public education**
- (111.G) Improving national support and coordination of food safety programs by building an information infrastructure for integrated food safety**

Applications for strengthening the nation’s food defense system (111.F) will support the development of integrated food safety programs that prevent and/or reduce intentional or unintentional threats to the safety of the U.S. food supply. Programs may focus on one or more of the following: 1) threat prevention (e.g. probabilistic assessment of vulnerabilities in postharvest area); 2) threat response (e.g. high throughput, fieldable and robust analytical methods for threat agents in food matrices); 3) risk management and communication; and 4) public awareness and education. Where appropriate, applications should show evidence of collaboration with the Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) and/or with other Federal, state, and university partners working in the area of food defense.

Applications for national support and coordination of integrated food safety programs and resources (111.G) will support the development of integrated food safety resources and outreach programs that facilitate national and international networking and coordination among the various users of food safety information, from production to consumption (e.g., farmers, producers, growers, packers, shippers, retailers, food service workers, processors, inspectors, veterinarians, sanitarians, educators, researchers, consumers). Integrated food safety resources may include the development of databases and interactive software that support decision-making and problem solving among food safety researchers, educators, consumers, and others. Outreach-related applications may include support of international, national, and regional conferences, multi-user distance education programs, satellite video-teleconferences, and other communication transfer technologies. Educational resources and activities may include the support of course or curriculum development, recruitment and career counseling, and participation in university-sponsored competitions related to food safety.

(b) **Special Emphasis Grants.** An applied priority area has been established for applications seeking special emphasis grants for a maximum of \$2 million per award for up to 4 years. Up to 3 special emphasis grants (for up to \$6 million total) will be solicited for the following applied priority area:

(111.H) Minimizing Microbial Food Safety Hazards of Fresh and Fresh-Cut Fruits and Vegetables

In 1998, the United States Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration jointly issued the guidance document, entitled, "*Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables*". The guidance provided an overview of the microbial food safety hazards, good agricultural practices (GAPs), and good manufacturing practices (GMPs) common to the growing, harvesting, washing, sorting, packing, and transporting of most raw or minimally-processed fruits and vegetables sold to consumers. The guidance suggested methods for minimizing these microbial food safety hazards. However, despite these efforts, foodborne illness associated with fresh produce continues to be documented. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that, in the 1990's, at least 12 percent of foodborne illnesses were linked to fresh produce items. Between 1996 and 2005, there were 63 foodborne illness outbreaks, resulting in over 8,040 reported illnesses and several deaths.

The goal of this special emphasis grant area is to reduce contamination of fresh and fresh-cut fruits and vegetables with foodborne pathogens, by filling needed knowledge gaps and communicating new methods for reducing contamination through improved education and outreach.

Knowledge gaps that need to be filled may include, but are not limited to:

- Routes of introduction of foodborne pathogens into the produce environment at all levels of the food chain (production, processing, packaging, transportation, storage, distribution, preparation, and consumption)
- Factors influencing the persistence and survival of the pathogens in the fresh and fresh-cut fruits and vegetables in the entire food chain, from farm to fork
- Application of this knowledge to reduce/eliminate the pathogens; enhancing communication and management in the food chain should be integral to the project.
- On-farm water quality management practices that improve food safety by reducing potential water and foodborne disease-causing pathogens

Topics to be addressed may include, but are not limited to:

- E. coli 0157:H7 in lettuce and green leafy vegetables
- Salmonella in cantaloupes, mangoes, and tomatoes
- Hepatitis A virus in green onions
- Shigella in parsley and cilantro

Special emphasis grants will only be awarded for applied priority area 111.H. Up to 3 special emphasis grants will be awarded in this priority area. All special emphasis grant applications must involve multi-disciplinary teams from multiple states and/or multiple institutions. Multi-disciplinary teams may include, among others, investigators in nutrition,

nutrition education, food science, food safety, food microbiology, public health, and program evaluation. There must be strong evidence of integration, and equally strong evidence that individuals from collaborating institutions (or organizations) worked cooperatively to develop the grant application. Evidence of involvement of stakeholders (e.g. producers, processors, distributors, regulators, other Federal agencies, and consumers), from concept to completion, should be documented.

Applications for special emphasis grants must include a management plan that is thoroughly described. The plan should include details for a steering or coordinating committee and a formative meeting of committee members. Also, a project evaluation plan must be included in the application. Where possible, applicants should include a sample protocol of their evaluation instrument(s).

Applicants submitting special emphasis grant applications are strongly encouraged to submit letters of intent via e-mail by **December 7, 2007**. Letters of intent should be submitted to Jan Singleton at jsingleton@csrees.usda.gov. Letters should not exceed 2 pages and must include a brief overview of the proposed objectives, procedures, target audience(s), expected outcomes, and a management plan that spans the entire project period. Program Leaders will review the letters of intent and provide written feedback to applicants regarding the scope and content of the proposed project. This feedback will not encourage the restructuring of a proposal from a special emphasis grant to a standard grant for purposes of improving the opportunity for success. Failure to submit a letter of intent will not preclude consideration of an application.

Applications that are not selected for funding under the special emphasis grant category will not be considered for funding as standard grants or bridge grants.

(c) Conference Grant. Applications are being solicited for professional meetings that bring together food safety researchers, educators, and extension professionals to identify targeted areas in food safety that can best be addressed using an integrated approach. Professional meetings will focus on: (1) enhancing collaboration among food safety researchers, educators, and extension professionals; (2) updating information and advancing the field of food safety, thus providing producers, processors, regulators, and consumers the ability to make informed food safety decisions; and (3) identifying future research, outreach, and educational needs. International conferences may be held outside of the United States only when conference results directly benefit the U.S. and can be immediately applied to U.S. food safety programs and policies. An evaluation plan for the conference should be included. Where possible, applicants should include a sample protocol of their evaluation instruments(s). Applicants considering submission under this category are strongly advised to consult the program contact for the Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program – National Integrated Food Safety Initiative before preparation and submission of this application. It is expected that grantees will plan and conduct a national and/or international food safety conference that results in the publication of conference proceedings. Publication in refereed journals is highly encouraged.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. CSREES anticipates that approximately \$12.7 million will be made available to fund new and renewal projects in FY 2008.

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2008, applications may be submitted to the National Integrated Food Safety Initiative as one of the following three types of requests:

- 1. New application.** This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the National Integrated Food Safety Initiative. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.
- 2. Renewal application.** This is a project application that requests additional funding for a project beyond the period that was approved in an original or amended award. Applications for renewed funding must contain the same information as required for new applications, and additionally must contain a Progress Report (see Project Narrative). Renewal applications must be received by the application due date, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in the appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.
- 3. Resubmitted application.** This is an application that had previously been submitted to the National Integrated Food Safety Initiative but was not funded. Project Directors (PDs) must respond to the previous review panel summary (see Project Narrative). Response to Previous Review). Resubmitted applications must be received by the application due date, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in the appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

C. Project Types

In FY 2008, the National Integrated Food Safety Initiative will award standard grants, special emphasis grants, conference grants, and bridge grants. The following definitions and restrictions will apply:

- 1. Standard Grant.** This is a funding mechanism whereby the Department agrees to support a specified level of effort for a predetermined time period without the announced intention of providing additional support at a future date. In FY 2008, for applied priority areas 111.A through 111.G (listed in Part 1, B, 2(a)), the maximum award is \$600,000 per award (total, not per year) and project periods may not exceed three years. For these priority areas, applications requesting smaller grants for one- to two-year project periods also are encouraged.

Special Emphasis Grant. This is a funding mechanism whereby the Department agrees to support a specified level of effort for a predetermined time period without the announced intention of providing additional support at a future date. For special emphasis grants (applied priority area 111.H in Part I, B, 2(b)), the maximum award is \$2 million per award (total, not per year) and project periods may not exceed four years. Applications that are not selected for funding under the special emphasis grant category will not be considered for funding as standard grants or bridge grants.

2. Conference Grant. This is a funding mechanism whereby the Department agrees to support professional meetings that bring together researchers, educators, extension professionals and others to identify needs, update information, or advance an area recognized as integral to research, education, and extension. A limited number of such meetings will be considered for partial or total support. For conference grants, the maximum award is \$50,000 per award (total, not per year). Project periods may not exceed two years.

4. Bridge Grant. This is a funding mechanism that is similar to a planning grant. Bridge grants are designed to assist small, mid-sized, and minority-serving institutions by enhancing collaboration among institutions, states, disciplines and functions (research, education, and extension) that might lead to future funding opportunities. Following the review of all applications submitted to the National Integrated Food Safety Initiative, bridge grants are awarded to eligible applicants (as defined in Part III, A.) who have submitted project applications that are considered meritorious, but: (a) rank below the funding cut-off during the peer review process; and (b) are identified as likely to benefit from continued funding for project development. For bridge grants, the maximum award is \$100,000 per award (total) for up to 2 years. **Applicants may not apply directly for bridge grants.**

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Colleges and universities (as defined in section 1404 of NARETPA) (7 U.S.C. 3103) are eligible to submit applications for the National Integrated Food Safety Initiative. For the purposes of this program, the terms “college” and “university” mean an educational institution in any state which (1) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate; (2) is legally authorized within such state to provide a program of education beyond secondary education; (3) provides an educational program for which a bachelor’s degree or any other higher degree is awarded; (4) is a public or other nonprofit institution; and (5) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association. Applications also may be submitted by 1994 Land-Grant Institutions (as defined in Part VIII, E.). A research foundation maintained by a college or university is not eligible to receive an award under this program. An applicant’s failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of an application deadline will result in CSREES returning the application without review or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude CSREES from making an award.

All special emphasis grant applications must involve multi-disciplinary teams from multiple states and/or multiple institutions.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply directly for funds, provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

If a grant provides a particular benefit to a specific agricultural commodity, the grant recipient is required to match the USDA funds awarded on dollar-for-dollar basis from non-Federal sources with cash and in-kind contributions. (See Part IV, B., 2.(c) for details.)

CSREES may waive the matching funds requirement for a grant if CSREES determines that: (a) the results of the project, while of particular benefit to a specific agricultural commodity, are likely to be applicable to agricultural commodities generally; or (b) the project involves a minor commodity, the project deals with scientifically important research, and the grant recipient is unable to satisfy the matching funds requirement.

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. The Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to CSREES in response to this RFA.

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the PD/PI first contact an Authorized Representative (AR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grants.gov. See http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp for steps for preparing to submit applications through Grants.gov.

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. Download and install PureEdge Viewer, a small, free program that provides access to the grant application. See http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#pureedge.
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on “**Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions**,” enter the CFDA number “10.303” or the Funding Opportunity Number “**USDA-CSREES-ICGP-001111**” in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, locate the item for this program and click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “[CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov](#).” This Guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If assistance is needed to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating PureEdge forms, using PureEdge with a Macintosh computer), refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

- Grants.gov customer support
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726
Business Hours: M-F 7:00 am – 9 pm Eastern Standard Time
Email: support@grants.gov

See <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Letter of Intent

Applicants submitting special emphasis grant applications are strongly encouraged to submit letters of intent via e-mail by **December 7, 2007**. Letters of intent should be submitted to Jan Singleton at jsingleton@csrees.usda.gov. Letters should not exceed 2 pages and must include a brief overview of the proposed objectives, procedures, target audience(s), expected outcomes, and a management plan that spans the entire project period. Program Leaders will review the letters of intent and provide oral or written feedback to applicants regarding the scope and content of the proposed project. Failure to submit a letter of intent will not preclude consideration of an application.

Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared following the document entitled “[A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov](#).” This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed in order to prepare an application in response to this RFA. If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.

Note the attachment requirements (eg., portable document format) in Part III section 3. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide available with the Application Package at Grants.gov. ANY PROPOSALS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM CSREES REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from consideration. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business (COB) on the closing date in the RFA.

If you do not own PDF generating software, Grants.gov provides online tools to assist applicants. Users will find a link to “[PDF Conversion Programs](#)” on (http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#pdf_conversion_programs).

1. R&R Other Project Information Form.

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 3. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Project Summary/Abstract (Field 6. on the Form).

b. Project Narrative (Field 7. on the Form).

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 18 pages single- or double-spaced pages, including figures and tables. This page limit was established to ensure fair and equitable competition.

For standard grant applications, the Project Narrative must include all of the following:

Justification: This section should include the following, when applicable:

- 1) A statement at the beginning that clearly identifies the priority area(s) (in Part I, B., 2.(a)) that is (are) addressed in the application;
- 2) Estimates of the magnitude of the food safety issues to be addressed and their relevance to stakeholders' needs, as well as ongoing state and national research, education, and extension programs; and
- 3) Reasons for having the work performed by the applying institution.

Objectives: Clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged statement(s) of specific aims of the proposed effort must be included in all proposals.

Methods: The procedures or methods to be applied to the proposed effort should be explicitly stated. This section should include, but should not necessarily be limited to:

- 1) A description of the proposed activities and the sequence in which they will be carried out;
- 2) Procedures, techniques, methods, or approaches to be employed, including their feasibility;
- 3) Means by which data will be analyzed or interpreted;
- 4) Evaluation methods or means by which education and extension or outreach activities will be evaluated;
- 5) Kinds of results or expected outcomes;
- 6) Details of plans to communicate results to stakeholders or to the public;
- 7) Pitfalls that might be encountered and possible solutions; and
- 8) Limitations to proposed procedures, techniques, methodologies, or approaches.

Literature Review: A summary of pertinent publications, with emphasis on their relationship to the effort being proposed, should be provided and should include all important and recent publications from other institutions, as well as those from the applicant institution. The citations themselves should be accurate, complete, and written in an acceptable journal format.

Current Work: Relevant unpublished institutional activities should be described.

Equipment and Facilities: All facilities which are available for use or assignment to the project during the requested period of support should be reported and described briefly. Any potentially hazardous materials, procedures, situations, or activities, whether or not directly related to a particular phase of the effort, must be explained fully, along with an outline of the precautions to be exercised. Examples include work with pathogenic organisms, toxic chemicals and experiments that may put human subjects or animals at risk. All items of major instrumentation available for use or assignment to the proposed project should be itemized. In addition, items of non-expendable equipment needed to conduct and bring the project to a successful conclusion should be listed, including dollar amounts. Justification must be provided if funds are requested for their acquisition (see Part IV, B., 4, Budget Narrative).

Project Timetable: The application should outline all important phases as a function of time, year by year, for the entire project, including periods beyond the grant funding period.

For special emphasis grant applications addressing applied priority area 111.H, the Project Narrative also must include:

A Management Plan: The application must clearly describe how the project will be managed throughout the duration of the project. Management of the project will be judged on the overall adequacy of: 1) the budget; 2) collaboration with co-PDs; 3) plans for reporting, assessing, and interpreting the results; and 4) coordination of dissemination of information over the duration of the project. The plan must include a timetable, with adequate details for each year of the project.

For standard grant applications that are renewal applications (as defined in Part II, B., 2.) the Project Narrative also must include:

Progress Report: A progress report must be included within the page limitation set for the Project Narrative portion of the application.

For conference grant applications, the Project Narrative must describe the conference proposed, and include all of the following:

- 1) Justification for the meeting;
- 2) Recent meetings on the same subject with dates and locations;
- 3) Names and organizational affiliations of the chairperson and other members of the organizing committee;
- 4) Proposed program (or agenda for the conference), including a listing of scheduled participants and their institutional affiliations; and
- 5) Method of announcement or invitation to be used.

c. Other Attachments (Field 11. on the Form).

- 1) Response to Previous Review. This requirement applies to **ALL** “Resubmitted Applications” as described under Part II, B., “Types of Applications.” PDs must respond to the previous review panel summary on no more than one page, titled “RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS REVIEW.” The addition of response to previous review should not be used to circumvent the text and/or figures and tables page limitations.
- 2) Cooperation and Institutional Units Involved. Cooperative, multi-institutional and multidisciplinary applications are encouraged. Where applicable, identify each institutional unit contributing to the project and designate the lead institution or institutional unit. Clearly define the programmatic roles, responsibilities and budget for each institutional partner.
- 3) Appendices to Project Narrative. Appendices to the Project Narrative are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed project. The addition of appendices should not be used to circumvent the text and/or figures and tables page limitations.
- 4) Collaborative Arrangements. If it will be necessary to enter into formal consulting or collaborative arrangements with others, such arrangements should be fully explained and justified. If the consultant(s) or collaborator(s) are known at the time of application, a vitae or resume should be provided. In addition, evidence (e.g., letter of support) should be provided that the collaborators involved have agreed to render these services. The applicant also will be required to provide additional information on consultants and collaborators in the budget portion of the application.

2. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 4. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

3. R&R Personal Data

As noted in Part V, 5., the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award. PLEASE DO NOT PROVIDE THE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OF PROJECT DIRECTOR / PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR.

4. R&R Budget

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 6. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

A budget form is required for each year of requested support and another summing the requested support over all requested years. Indirect costs should be calculated as specified under Part IV, D., and identified on Field H. of the Budget (R&R Budget). All budgets should include reasonable amounts for transportation and subsistence costs for appropriate personnel to make two trips to Washington, DC for Project Directors’ meetings and updates. Conference grant applications must include an estimated total Budget (R&R Budget) for the conference and an itemized breakdown of all support requested from the National Integrated Food Safety Initiative.

The budget for a conference grant application may include a reasonable amount for transportation and subsistence costs for participants. Funds may be requested under any of the categories listed on the form, provided that the item or service for which support is requested is allowable under the authorizing legislation, the applicable statutes, regulations, and Federal cost principles, and these program guidelines, and can be justified as necessary for the successful conduct of the proposed project. Applicants also must include a budget narrative to justify their budget requests.

The R&R Subaward Budget Attachment described in section 6.1 of “[A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov](#)” should be utilized to provide the information. Funds may be requested under any of the categories listed on the form, provided that the item or service for which support is requested is allowable under the authorizing legislation, the applicable statutes, regulations, and Federal cost principles, and these program guidelines, and can be justified as necessary for the successful conduct of the proposed project.

If an applicant concludes that matching funds are not required as specified under Part III, B., a justification should be included in the Budget Narrative. CSREES will consider this justification when ascertaining final matching requirements or determining if required matching can be waived. CSREES retains the right to make final determinations regarding matching requirements.

For those grants where matching funds are required as specified under Part III, B., **the R&R Budget (Federal and Non-Federal) must be utilized.** Applications should include written verification of commitments of matching support (including both cash and in-kind contributions) from third parties. Written verification means:

For any third party cash contributions, a separate pledge agreement for each donation, signed by the authorized organizational representative of the donor organization and the applicant organization, which must include: (1) the name, address, and telephone number of the donor; (2) the name of the applicant organization; (3) the title of the project for which the donation is made; (4) the dollar amount of the cash donation; and (5) a statement that the donor will pay the cash contribution during the grant period.

For any third party in-kind contributions, a separate pledge agreement for each contribution, signed by the authorized organizational representatives of the donor organization and the applicant organization, which must include: (1) the name, address, and telephone number of the donor; (2) the name of the applicant organization; (3) the title of the project for which the donation is made; (4) a good faith estimate of the current fair market value of the third party in-kind contribution; and (5) a statement that the donor will make the contribution during the grant period.

The sources and amounts of all matching support from outside the applicant institution should be summarized on a separate page and placed in the application immediately following the Budget Narrative. All pledge agreements should be placed in the application immediately following the summary of matching support.

The value of applicant contributions to the project shall be established in accordance with the applicable cost principles. Applicants should refer to OMB Circular A-21, Cost Principles for Educational Institutions, for further guidance and other requirements relating to matching and allowable costs.

5. Supplemental Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI. 1. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Program Code (Field 2. on the Form). Enter the program code name “National Integrated Food Safety Initiative” and the one program code (111.A through 111.H) that most closely corresponds to the priority area addressed (see Part I, B., 2. (a) and(b)).

b. Conflict of Interest List (Field 8. on the Form). A conflict of interest list is required under this program. Please include a conflict of interest list

C. Submission Dates and Times

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

While not required, for special emphasis grant applicants only, letters of intent must be received by **December 7, 2007**. All applications must be received by Grants.gov by COB on **January 11, 2008** (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

In FY 2007, a number of applications were submitted with incorrectly formatted attachments (only PDF files are acceptable as attachments). In FY 2008, incorrectly formatted attachments will not be forwarded to panelists for review. It is the responsibility of the applicant to work with their individual sponsored programs offices or grants submission staff to ensure that all attachments are submitted in the correct PDF format. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their electronic applications early (preferably at least one week before the due date of January 11, 2008), so they can confirm that all attachments were transmitted in the correct format. If attachments were incorrectly formatted, a corrected application may be re-submitted before the due date of January 11, 2008. Late applications will not normally be accepted.

The receipt of all applications will be acknowledged by e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received a confirmation message from CSREES within 30 days of submission of the application, please contact the Program Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel. Once the**

application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.

D. Funding Restrictions

The FY 2007 Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution (Public Law 110-05) limited indirect costs to 20 percent of the total Federal funds provided under each award. CSREES anticipates that the FY 2008 Appropriations Act will include a similar limitation. Therefore, when preparing budgets, applicants should limit their requests for recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of their institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 20 percent of total Federal funds awarded. Another method of calculating the maximum allowable is 25 percent of the total direct costs. Please note that if the FY 2008 Appropriations Act contains a different indirect cost limitation CSREES will contact each successful applicant to apply the correct rate prior to the award of a grant.

Funds awarded under this program may not be used for the renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

E. Other Submission Requirements

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled "A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov."

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

Each application will be evaluated in a two-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel.

Reviewers will be selected based upon training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) the level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields; (c) the need to include as reviewers other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs; (d) the need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) the need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness to producers and the general public of each application.

B. Evaluation Criteria

For Standard Grants and Special Emphasis Grants

The evaluation criteria below will be used in reviewing applications submitted in response to this RFA:

1. Overall Merit of the Application.

- (a) Proposed goal, approach, or hypothesis is conceptually adequate and related to selected applied priority area(s) (see Part I, B., 2.(a) and (b));
- (b) Objectives are clearly described and related to selected applied priority area(s) (see Part I, B., 2.(a) and (b));
- (c) Need for proposed project is demonstrated;
- (d) Target audience(s) is identified (where appropriate);
- (e) Proposed technique, procedure, or methodology is clearly described;
- (f) Technique, procedure, or methodology is suitable and feasible for proposed project;
- (g) Evaluation procedures, or means by which data will be analyzed and interpreted, are clearly described and suitable for proposed project;
- (h) Expected results or outcomes are clearly stated; and
- (i) There is a high probability that the proposed project will be successful.

2. Qualifications of Proposed Project Personnel, Adequacy of Facilities and Budget Request.

- (a) Roles of project personnel are clearly defined;
- (b) Evidence that project personnel have sufficient expertise to complete proposed project is provided;
- (c) Evidence of quality partnerships with other disciplines and institutions is provided, where appropriate;
- (d) Sufficient time has been allocated for systematic attainment of objectives;
- (e) Evidence is provided of institutional experience and competence in the selected applied priority area(s) (see Part I, B., 2.(a) and (b));

- (f) Support personnel, facilities, and instrumentation are adequate;
- (g) All necessary budget information is provided and all figures are correctly tallied;
- (h) Budget narrative provides adequate justification for all budget categories; and
- (i) Proposed budget is appropriate for scope of proposed project.

3. Relevance of Proposed Project to Current Issues in Food Safety and Related Topical Areas.

- (a) Description of relevance to current issues in food safety is included; and
- (b) Proposed project makes a unique and original contribution to food safety.

Additional evaluation criteria for Special Emphasis Grants in priority area 111.H are as follows:

Priority Area 111.H: Minimizing Microbial Food Safety Hazards of Fresh and Fresh-cut Fruits and Vegetables

- 4. Involvement of multi-disciplinary teams from multiple states and/or multiple institutions. Strong evidence of integration and equally strong evidence that individuals from collaborating institutions (or organizations) worked cooperatively to develop the grant application. Evidence of involvement of the stakeholders (e.g. producers, processors, distributors, regulators, other Federal agencies, and consumers) from concept to completion.
- 5. Application clearly describes how the project will be managed throughout the duration of the project. The overall management plan addresses all of the following: 1) the budget; 2) collaboration with co-PDs; 3) plans for reporting, assessing, and interpreting the results; and 4) coordination of dissemination of information over the duration of the project. The plan includes a timetable, with adequate details for each year of the project. The plan includes details for a steering or coordinating committee and a formative meeting of committee members.

Conference Grants

The following evaluation criteria will be applied to applications that seek support for conferences:

- 1. Relevance of Proposed Conference to Food Safety in Fostering Interaction among Food Safety Researchers, Educators, Extension Professionals and Others;
- 2. Qualifications of Organizing Committee and Appropriateness of Invited Speakers to Topic Areas Being Covered;
- 3. Uniqueness and Timeliness of Conference; and

4. Appropriateness of Budget Request.

Bridge Grants

For standard grant applications under consideration for bridge grants, depending on the applied priority area addressed, all of the appropriate evaluation criteria will be applied. In addition, applications under consideration for bridge grants will be evaluated based on the potential that further funding of the proposed project would: (1) help to foster important collaborations and activities that might lead to future program success; or (2) lead to success in obtaining National Integrated Food Safety Initiative and/or other grant funding in the future.

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, the academic and administrative autonomy of an academic institution shall be determined by reference to the current edition of the Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, VA 22042. Phone: (703) 532-2300. Web site: <http://www.hepinc.com>.

Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of peer reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

D. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one-time basis as part of the responsibility determination prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another CSREES program. CSREES will provide copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the preaward process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors which may exclude an applicant from receiving Federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of CSREES shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the awarding official of CSREES as the effective date of the grant shall be no later than September 30 of the Federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. It should be noted that the project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by CSREES under this RFA shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's assistance regulations (parts 3015 and 3019 of 7 CFR).

B. Award Notice

The grant award document shall include, at a minimum, the following:

1. Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the Administrator has issued an award under the terms of this request for applications;
2. Title of project;
3. Name(s) and institution(s) of PDs chosen to direct and control approved activities;
4. Identifying award number assigned by the Department;
5. Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
6. Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the Administrator during the project period;
7. Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
8. Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
9. Applicable award terms and conditions (see <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view CSREES award terms and conditions);
10. Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

11. Other information or provisions deemed necessary by CSREES to carry out its respective granting activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular grant.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several Federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These include, but are not limited to:

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121 – USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

7 CFR Part 3015—USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, implementing OMB directives (i.e. OMB Circular Nos. A-21 and A-122 now codified at 2 CFR Parts 220 and 230)) and incorporating provisions of 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308 (formerly the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Pub. L. No. 95-224), as well as general policy requirements applicable to recipients of Departmental financial assistance.

7 CFR Part 3017—USDA implementation of Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants).

7 CFR Part 3018—USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying. Imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of Federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

7 CFR Part 3019—USDA implementation of OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-profit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3407—CSREES procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

29 U.S.C. 794 (section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 7 CFR Part 15b (USDA implementation of statute)—prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in Federally assisted programs.

35 U.S.C. 200 et seq.—Bayh-Dole Act, controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in Federally assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

Grantees are required to submit annual and summary evaluation reports via CSREES' Current Research Information System (CRIS) <http://cwf.uvm.edu/cris>. When access to the web is unavailable, please contact the CRIS Office at 202-690-0009 or e-mail cdeckers@cris.csrees.usda.gov. CRIS is an electronic, Web-based inventory system that facilitates both grantee submissions of project outcomes and public access to information on Federally-funded projects.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact Dr. Jan Singleton; National Program Leader; Food Science and Food Safety; Plant and Animal Systems Unit; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; USDA; STOP 2220; 1400 Independence Ave., SW; Washington, DC 20250-2220; Telephone: (202) 401-1954; Fax: (202) 401-9862; E-mail: jsingleton@csrees.usda.gov.

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Access to Review Information

Copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments will be sent to the applicant PD after the review process has been completed.

B. Use of Funds; Changes

1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility

Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, the grantee may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of grant funds.

2. Changes in Project Plans

(a) The permissible changes by the grantee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project grant shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other similar aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the grantee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the agency contact.

(b) Changes in approved goals or objectives shall be requested by the grantee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests for such changes be approved which are outside the scope of the original approved project.

(c) Changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel shall be requested by the grantee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes.

(d) Transfers of actual performance of the substantive programmatic work in whole or in part and provisions for payment of funds, whether or not Federal funds are involved, shall be requested by the grantee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

(e) Changes in Project Period: The project period may be extended by CSREES without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) as the ADO determines may be necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed five years. Any extension of time shall be conditioned upon prior request by the grantee and approval in writing by the ADO, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

(f) Changes in Approved Budget: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved budget must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the

ADO prior to instituting such changes if the revision will involve transfers or expenditures of amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or award.

C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in a grant, it becomes a part of the record of CSREES transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. The original copy of an application that does not result in a grant will be retained by the Agency for a period of three years. Other copies will be destroyed. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

D. Regulatory Information

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule-related Notice to 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

E. Definitions

1890 Land-Grant Institution means one of those institutions eligible to receive funds under the Act of August 30, 1890 (26 Stat. 419, chapter 841, 7 U.S.C. 321 et seq.) including Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University.

1994 Land-Grant Institution means one of those institutions as defined in 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note) as amended. These institutions are commonly referred to as Tribal Colleges or Tribal Universities.

Administrator means the Administrator of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) and any other officer or employee of the Department to whom the authority involved may be delegated.

Authorized Departmental Officer means the Secretary or any employee of the Department who has the authority to issue or modify grant instruments on behalf of the Secretary.

Authorized Representative means the president or chief executive officer of the applicant organization or the official, designated by the president or chief executive officer of the applicant organization, who has the authority to commit the resources of the organization.

Budget period means the interval of time (usually 12 months) into which the project period is divided for budgetary and reporting purposes.

Cash contributions means the applicant's cash outlay, including the outlay of money contributed to the applicant by non-Federal third parties.

Department or USDA means the United States Department of Agriculture.

Education activity means formal classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, and practicum experience in the food and agricultural sciences and other related matters such as faculty development, student recruitment and services, curriculum development, instructional materials and equipment, and innovative teaching methodologies.

Extension activity means an act or process that delivers science-based knowledge and informal educational programs to people, enabling them to make practical decisions.

Grant means the award by the Authorized Departmental Officer of funds to an eligible recipient for the purpose of conducting the identified project.

Grantee means an organization designated in the award document as the responsible legal entity to which a grant is awarded.

Hispanic-serving Institution means an institution of higher education that: (1) is an eligible "college" or "university" (as defined in Part III, A.); and (2) at the time of application, has an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students that is at least 25 percent Hispanic students.

Integrated means to bring the three components of the agricultural knowledge system (research, education, and extension) together around a problem area or activity.

Matching means that portion of allowable project costs not borne by the Federal Government, including the value of in-kind contributions.

Peer review means an evaluation of a proposed project for scientific or technical quality and relevance performed by experts with the scientific knowledge and technical skills to conduct the proposed work or to give expert advice on the merits of a proposal.

Project Director or PD means the single individual designated by the grantee in the grant application and approved by the Authorized Departmental Officer who is responsible for the direction and management of the project, also known as the principal investigator for research activities.

Prior approval means written approval evidencing prior consent by an Authorized Departmental Officer.

Project means the particular activity within the scope of the program supported by an award.

Project period means the total length of time, as stated in the award document and modifications thereto, if any, during which Federal sponsorship begins and ends.

Research activity means a scientific investigation or inquiry that results in the generation of knowledge.

Secretary means the Secretary of Agriculture and any other officer or employee of the Department to whom the authority involved may be delegated.

Third party in-kind contributions means non-cash contributions of property or services provided by non-Federal third parties, including real property, equipment, supplies and other expendable property, directly benefiting and specifically identifiable to a funded project or program.

Total integrated, multifunctional research, education, and extension approach means that the combination of grants (although the individual grants may involve only research, education, or extension activities or a combination thereof) awarded under the fiscal year's program components will work together to address the priorities in United States agriculture as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture in consultation with the Advisory Board, that involve integrated research, extension, and education activities.