CSREES Administrator's Report to the Partnership

Winter 2005

The mission of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is to advance knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities.

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

November 2005

Advancing Knowledge for the Food and Agricultural System

MESSAGE FROM THE CSREES ADMINISTRATOR

The American Soybean Association and others praised the USDA/Land-Grant University Partnership for our rapid and effective response to potential problems associated with the arrival of soybean rust in America. Last November, researchers found what they thought to be rust in a field at the Louisiana State University Agricultural Experiment Station. The CSREES/University Plant Diagnostic Laboratory Network, in collaboration with the Agricultural Research Service and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, confirmed the diagnosis, implemented a rapid response plan, and within 5 days began training others via websites to survey for the disease and advise farmers. Good information and communication saved producers millions in fungicide and equipment costs. This exemplifies a key factor of our System: when we work together, great things get done.

The Avian Influenza Coordinated Agricultural Project (AI-CAP grant), awarded by the National Research Initiative (NRI) last year, is another example of collaboration to address a critical, national agricultural and potential human health issue. Led by University of Maryland and Ohio State University scientists, the AI-CAP grant focuses on surveillance, vaccine development and deployment, and producer and public education to address this international threat to animal and human health. The project has provided a focal point for linkages between the agricultural research and education system and the Centers for Disease Control and other public health system components. This and other CAP awards addressing specific animal disease problems, food safety, and use of new genomic information can expedite solutions to current problems and demonstrate agriculture's relevance to a broad public agenda.

Multistate, multi-institutional, and now multifunctional projects have long been an effective way to demonstrate how the strength of networked institutions and agencies can work to address national issues, often with critical local implications. These collaborations bring expertise and perspectives to issues seldom found in one laboratory, agency, or extension office; build or sustain capacity within and among institutions; establish colleagues for faculty in small departments; and assure that programs are coordinated, not redundant. Multi-institutional work can help train future professionals and orient them to problem solving — the cornerstone of the agricultural system.

Many tools facilitate collaborations—multistate research programs; integrated research, education, and extension grants; regional centers; NRI CAP grants; eXtension and its new communities of practice; information-based networks, such as the Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN); and matriculation agreements across institutions for innovative distance education programs.

By reaffirming our commitment to work together to serve the nation and strategically expanding our collaborative efforts, we can distinguish ourselves as more than just a collection of universities, agencies, and organizations seeking to support ourselves. Our future as a system may best be defined by how well we leverage our collective power in working with other organizations on large world problems. Last year, CSREES invested approximately $25 million in joint competitive programs. This money combined with an additional $125 million from other agencies helps address our mutual missions. By maximizing research and education efforts and funding through collaboration with other partners, we can best address the many challenges facing the food and agricultural system.

— Colien Hefferan, Administrator

USDA-CSREES Response to Avian Influenza (AI)

To provide a coordinated framework for a national response to AI, in January 2005, CSREES competitive funds established a 3-year $5 million Avian Influenza Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP) through its NRI Animal Biosecurity Program. The integrated AI CAP focuses on prevention and control of AI in the United States. Involving researchers, educators, and extension specialists from 18 states, and jointly led by the University of Maryland (**www.agnr.umd.edu/aicap**), and the Ohio State University, the AI CAP is working on four objectives: the development of critical tests and vaccines for improved detection and control; surveillance and viral evolution studies in live bird markets in California, Minnesota, and New York to study transmission risk factors and provide educational programs; AI surveillance in migratory and non-migratory waterfowl of three of the four major U.S. flyways (Pacific, Mississippi, Atlantic); and, the molecular adaptation of the virus from waterfowl to domestic poultry.

Stakeholders include industry, other federal and state agencies (for example, APHIS; ARS; CDC; NIH) and renowned AI experts. The project holds two annual meetings each year. The next stakeholder meeting is in January 2006 during the International Poultry Exposition in Atlanta. The next research community meeting will be held during the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) convention in Hawaii in July 2006.

The AI CAP is also coordinating activities with the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense **(http://fazd.tamu.edu).** This coordination may expand the surveillance network to cover the final major U.S. flyway, the Central flyway.

AI CAP project leaders are currently communicating with international partners in an effort to broaden the U.S. surveillance network for waterfowl into an American network (Canada, Central America, and South America).

The National Animal Health Laboratory Network (**www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/highlights/section6/section6-6.html)**, jointly supported by CSREES and APHIS, is also playing a critical role for AI by melding federal, state, and university laboratory resources to better respond to all animal health emergencies. Peter Johnson, USDA/CSREES – **pjohnson@csrees.usda.gov.**

State Liaison Program Being Established

At its July meeting, the Land-Grant Partnership Working Group recommended that CSREES assign one or more national program leaders (NPLs) to each state to act as liaisons between the state's land-grant institutions and CSREES in order to improve communication, enhance collaboration and strengthen the Land-Grant Partnership. CSREES administrators are developing a plan to implement the program in 2006.

One NPL and one backup will be assigned to each state. Liaisons will review state plans-of-work and annual reports and will serve as a point of contact for the institution with CSREES, USDA and, where appropriate, other federal agencies. Their goal will be to make it easier to do business with CSREES and to take a better advantage of the unique CSREES/Land-Grant University Partnership. NPL liaisons in each region will meet regularly with a CSREES liaison to the regional associations to discuss regional issues and facilitate multistate activities and coordination. As an important element to make this program successful, these liaisons are not intended to lobby or advocate on behalf of the state. Their purpose is to facilitate intercommunication and to enhance mutual understanding between the state and federal partner.

We will ask liaisons to visit campus(es) at least once every 2 years. In some states with multiple land-grant institutions, this may not be possible, but we will try. During campus visits, we are suggesting that liaisons give a seminar on CSREES describing who we are and what we do; meet with extension faculty, research faculty, academic faculty (separately or together), administrators, and students; and, in particular, ask every group, "How are we doing? What can CSREES do to serve you better? How can we improve?" We expect our liaisons to make every effort to become familiar with the programs, goals, and capabilities of the institutions.

We will be grateful for your assistance in making this a successful effort. Please let us know if there are specific topics that you would like liaisons to be able to address or if you have suggestions on strengthening this program. Contact: Ralph Otto, USDA/CSREES – **rotto@csrees.usda.gov.**

Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) Update

The destruction left by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita affected millions of people and animals; demolished housing, businesses, and portions of the Gulf aquaculture industry; and harmed widespread environmental areas. CSREES and the Land-Grant System responded to this national devastation through EDEN. While the Extension Service has always been involved in disaster work, it was not until the 1994 floods of the north central states that the Land-Grant System's expertise was brought together to form EDEN. The network's mission is to reduce the impact of natural and manmade disasters through education. Resources are contributed by member land-grant institutions and made available online at **http://www.eden.lsu.edu**. Currently 48 states, Guam and Puerto Rico are represented with land-grant institutions as members of EDEN.

Even though the Web site is maintained at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, important sections were developed in a dynamic format, allowing remote changes and additions. When Hurricane Katrina made landfall, information management was maintained at Purdue University, making current information readily available on EDEN's Web site.

Immediate contact was made with the three most severely affected states – Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama (and later Texas) – to determine what was needed by state and county educators. In response, additional educational resources about human trauma and stress; financial management; food and water safety; well decontamination; housing; mold and moisture; animal feed/hay, shelters and disposal; and generator safety and use were added to the site. An educational contact list about topics like post-disaster community development and planning was quickly developed and posted for extension staff in affected states. The site received 142,000 direct hits in the month of September, following both hurricanes. EDEN also focused on providing evacuees relocated to other states with recovery information available from their home state land-grant institutions.

EDEN also established a working relationship with eXtension and set up a FAQ system for the four affected states. Because immediate information was needed, the technical turnaround time in this system development was very rapid.

As a result of last year's successful work with the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) and the Department of Energy's Building America Program, financial support and technical resources were extended to support housing programs as states begin to rebuild much needed housing.

EDEN has become widely known and recognized as a valuable resource for disaster information and education at the federal level, especially by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; the Department of Homeland Security, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); and the American Red Cross.

EDEN's diverse information responds to different disaster scenarios. During Katrina, EDEN demonstrated the critical effectiveness of the integrated relationship between USDA/CSREES and the state Land-Grant and Sea-Grant Partners. EDEN coordinators and the Land-Grant System continue to improve the availability of information before, during and after disasters to reduce devastation and destruction. EDEN was recently selected as a pioneering Community of Practice for eXtension. EDEN will hold a conference early in 2006 for extension educators to examine what worked well and what did not work in the System's response to Hurricane Katrina and Rita. Contact: Joe Wysocki, USDA/CSREES – **jwysocki@csrees.usda.gov.**

CSREES-Funded Projects Address Socio-Economic Aspects of Louisiana's Coastal Wetlands

Traditionally, coastal wetland restoration research involves a biophysical approach and lacks socio-economic dimensions. Leveraging with Louisiana State and other federal funds (for example, Sea Grants and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency), CSREES funds support economists at Louisiana State University (LSU) to conduct research and education programs related to coastal wetland resource management by incorporating social and economic perspectives. This research may provide valuable insights in guiding coastal wetland restoration efforts in light of the environmental damage done to Louisiana and nearby Gulf states by recent Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

In a report, "Stewardship Incentives for Louisiana's Coastal Landowners, that appeared in an "*Interpretive Topic Series on Coastal Wetland Restoration in Louisiana*," LSU researchers estimated that it would cost an average of $2,564 per acre to restore coastal wetlands. An on-going research project is assessing a restoration project selection process based on a cost-efficacy approach. Results of this project will provide economic tools to help policy-makers evaluate the efficiency of coastal wetland restoration. In May 2004, CSREES, LSU, the Louisiana Sea Grant Program, and the Farm Foundation co-sponsored a national conference to explore social and economic aspects of coastal wetland restoration. Education and outreach materials, such as "Louisiana Wetland News," published periodically, are available to policy-makers and the general public. Contact: Fen Hunt, USDA/CSREES – **fhunt@csrees.usda.gov.**

CSREES Homeland Security Effort Update

CSREES cooperates with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and other partners to coordinate the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) and the National Plant Diagnostic Network (NPDN). These networks leverage federal and state resources to enhance detection of and enable a rapid and sufficient response to food, animal and plant health emergencies. The goal is to enhance information sharing, surge capacity, and coordinated resource allocation. A joint effort among CSREES, APHIS/Veterinary Services and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD), the NAHLN is a functional national network of existing animal diagnostic laboratories. A joint effort among CSREES and APHIS/Plant Protection and Quarantine, the NPDN is a functional national network of existing plant diagnostic laboratories in all states. The NPDN was an important contributor to the soybean rust coordinated framework that provided near real time information about the spread of soybean rust on the North American continent, saving soybean growers millions of dollars by preventing unnecessary fungicide applications.

Land-Grant Universities use various CSREES funding vehicles to fulfill the scientific discovery needs to anticipate and prepare for threats to our homeland, whether natural or intentional. One example is a multistate research committee entitled: Economic Assessment of Changes in Trade Arrangements, Bio-terrorism Threats and Renewable Fuels Requirements on the U.S. Grain & Oilseed Sector. One investigator provided an analysis of what could happen if grain handling capacity at the Port of New Orleans was reduced as much as 25 percent. This work was performed prior to hurricane Katrina and provided valuable insight when the actual scenario came to pass.

CSREES provides funding and leadership for biosecurity development projects through the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. Notable SBIR projects include several that focus on detecting food borne biosecurity threats such, as salmonella, e-coli, Listeria, hepatitis, and foreign contaminants.

The Integrated Research, Education, and Extension (Section 406) Food Safety Program provided funding for the Food Policy Institute at Rutgers and the University of Minnesota's National Center for Food Protection and Defense. The objective of the Rutgers project is to improve food biosecurity through threat prevention and response, risk management and communication, and public education efforts. The University of Minnesota project aims to improve communication and food protection risk management activities throughout the food regulatory system. This investment will provide synergies with investments by the Department of Homeland Security.

CSREES research, education, extension, and integrated line items work to complement not only each other, but those of other agencies. Contact: Bill Hoffman, USDA/CSREES – **whoffman@csrees.usda.gov.**

CSREES CYFAR and 4-H Military Partnerships Build Extension Capacity

CSREES CYFAR programs and 4-H Military Partnerships have enhanced 4-H extension capacity not only to serve new audiences, but also to respond to a variety of citizen's emerging needs. A key to the effectiveness of both CYFAR programs and 4-H Military Partnerships is building effective collaborations among universities and other organizations which share a common youth development goal. The collaborations create broad community investment in the programs and contribute to long-term sustainability.

The CYFAR program was created in 1990 to marshal the resources of the Land-Grant University Cooperative Extension System (CES) to reach an audience of at-risk, low-income youth not previously served by extension. CYFAR provides grants to states for community-based educational programs for children and youth who are at immediate risk for not meeting fundamental needs for safety, shelter, food, and care; for not developing the basic skills of reading, language, and computation: and not living healthy, happy young lives. Longer term, they are at-risk for not becoming dependable family members, participants in the work force or responsible citizens. To provide the broad range of services needed to effectively address such complex needs, extension has collaborated with other organizations and agencies at both state and local levels. Because of these strong collaborations, approximately 65 percent of CYFAR community programs have been sustained 6 years beyond the close of CSREES funding. Another result is that extension is now a strong leader in addressing new issues surfacing in communities and states. Over the past 15 years, CYFAR programs have served about 50,000 youth each year in 200 communities in all states and territories. This confirms extension's capacity to reach at-risk populations, to collaborate effectively to meet citizen needs, and to sustain such programs long term.

Army and Air Force partnerships with CYFAR and 4-H have taken advantage of extension's capacity to reach out to audiences not previously served. Initiated to bring 4-H youth development and youth technology experience to military youth programs, these partnerships draw upon the unique strengths of each organization to meet critical needs of youth wherever they live. Each state identified a State 4-H Military Liaison to link military and county 4-H staff and to coordinate all 4-H military efforts across

the state – whether Army, Air Force, other branches or National Guard or Reserve. Together 4-H and military staff have built a support network for military youth who move frequently as their parents' assignments change. Research clearly shows how important it is for all youth to build and maintain strong connections with other youth and adults during their adolescent years. Military youth who can "find 4-H" in any of 3,150 counties in the United States and also on Army and Air Force bases overseas have an immediate connection to other youth and caring adults. Thanks to the work of committed State 4-H Military Liaisons, 4-H programs in all counties across the United States are welcoming military youth and their families and military staff are working closely with 4-H educators in those counties. As of October 2005, more than 15,000 Army and Air Force youth are enrolled in almost 600 4-H clubs all around the world. Army and Air Force staff from all installations have been trained in "4-H 101" and 4-H has become an active partner in a military youth development conference in Europe. Since these partnerships began in 1995, over $46 million has been distributed to universities and counties.

When the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq began, existing military partnerships allowed extension to respond rapidly with appropriate and helpful resources both on CYFERnet and in communities surrounding bases. Expanding deployments of National Guard and Reserve personnel created new issues because these families do not live on installations and do not have ready access to military resources and services. They often do not consider themselves military and are not used to the stresses associated with parental deployment.

Recognizing the team building ability of State 4-H Military Liaisons, Army Child and Youth Services provided approximately $3 million in Operation: Military Kids (OMK) grants to states for development of statewide networks of support for these "suddenly military" youth and their families. Twenty OMK State Teams (including 4-H, Boys and Girls Clubs, the American Legion, Schools, military and non-military youth, and National Guard and Reserve staff) have educated 4,700 citizens in military culture and the impacts of deployment and provided a wide variety of educational and recreational programs for Guard and Reserve children and youth. These include teen speakers bureaus (Speak Out for Military Kids) and Mobile Technology Labs to allow military youth to connect with their deployed parents. OMK teams have distributed 16,000 Hero Packs to say *thank you* to young military children.

As a result of their rapid response to needs of military youth and families during high deployment times, 4-H and extension are recognized as valuable resources for quality youth and family programs and as skilled leaders in catalyzing community action to meet urgent needs. Through these partnership efforts, service members are better prepared to focus on the mission at hand, while confident their children and families are being supported at home. CSREES and extension are reaching out to yet another new military audience and serving as a model for wise use of public resources.

When hurricanes struck in the Gulf states, 4-H and CYFAR programs worked with partner organizations to expand support to affected youth and families. Additional stresses were placed on children and families when National Guard personnel were called to action in the United States. OMK programs were called upon to help when National Guard members and their families lost homes and were forced to evacuate. The Louisiana CYFAR Project quickly established a new community site for evacuee youth and families from New Orleans who had come to East Baton Rouge. On the first weekend of the storm, CYFERnet posted new educational and support resources to help educators and service providers cope with the extra stress and work loads. Extension faculty from these states credit their CYFAR and Military partnerships with vital relationships with community agencies and citizens in CYFAR communities and with National Guard which brought Extension to the center of recovery efforts.

4-H and CYFAR faculty have responded rapidly to urgent needs of citizens – whether for natural disasters or military deployments. These experiences clearly set a standard for the future work of the CES. They also have shown partners that extension is a valuable and well networked resource that can anticipate new issues and can be called upon to respond to new challenges. The exposure of the low-income people most severely affected by the storms, calls for more attention to poverty and risk issues which are so central to the mission of CYFAR. Military children and families will continue to faces stresses of deployments, re-deployments, and reunions. Base closings and relocations of families returning from Europe to the United States will add stresses to the schools and communities which are either losing or gaining large populations. Extension partners in CYFAR and Military will expect the same professional and efficient responses. Sharon Wright, USDA/CSREES – **swright@csrees.usda.gov.**

Keep current with CSREES news releases go to:

http://www.csrees.usda.gov

and look under "newsroom."

Texas Cooperative Extension and the Cornell Family Life Development Center Update Operation READY (Resources for Educating About Deployment and You) for Army Commanders, Soldiers, and Families

One of the ways CSREES and the system have worked to support families and soldiers is through Operation READY (Resources for Educating about Deployment and You). Initially developed in 1994, READY materials are deployment-specific educational materials and training developed by extension and delivered through military and civilian personnel, which target the stress soldiers, spouses, and their children experience before, during, and after military deployments. These materials are now in their third revision through an Interagency Agreement between the Department of Army and CSREES, Texas Cooperative Extension and the Cornell Family Life Development Center.

Operation READY educational materials target populations that include Rear Detachment Commanders, Family Readiness Groups, Family Assistance Center Program Staff and Volunteers (Active and Reserve Components), military leaders, soldiers, spouses, and children. The website (go to **www.myarmylifetoo.com** and click "Managing Deployment) includes video format information about "Introduction to Army Community Service," "Introduction to Operation Ready" deployment information for soldiers and families, "Practical Readiness" with information about streamlining the deployment process, "Coping with Stress," "Making Your Reunion Work," "Family Readiness Groups" which help service members and their families cope with Army life and "Family Assistance Center," to help families with their needs during a deployment. Contact: Caroline Crocoll, USDA/CSREES - **ccrocoll@csrees.usda.gov.**

One Solution Initiative Update

Driven by Executive and Congressional mandates, CSREES' One Solution Initiative is integrating a disparate set of reporting processes into a more coherent and unified reporting system. The intent is to increase the quality and completeness of reports to OMB, Congress, and the public; better align the budget with performance outcomes across research, education, and extension; and simplify our partners' reporting burden.

Within the last 6 months, individual CSREES units have determined policy and technical implications, and their relative roles for achieving a unified CSREES reporting system.

The on-line submission of the 2007-2011 Plan of Work (POW) for Research and Extension formula funds is nearly complete. A working prototype is being tested in seven states. Training has been given in all regions on how to develop plans of work for input into the system, scheduled for release in November 2005. The workflow for on-line review by national program leaders is the next task.

One of the most significant accomplishments by One Solution is an internal proposal to standardize the form and content of in-bound reports from partners and grantees.

A key feature of One Solution is the use of three or more taxonomies to classify in-bound reports and for retrieving and compiling out-bound reports. These taxonomies will be modeled after the Current Research Information System (CRIS) elements and will include research, education, and extension information.

The CRIS database is migrating to a common relational architecture currently shared by CREEMS and REEIS. Projected completion for this task is early 2006. This will increase the flexibility of data management and improve the ability for different systems to share data and communicate with partner systems.

A one-stop web portal will allow the public, partners, and staff to access information about the Initiative while CSREES transitions to a fully operating portal. A storefront being developed will guide users to the on-line POW process, planning and accountability training, the business case, iEdison site for inventions, modified and draft taxonomies, updates, working groups, university partner reporting systems links, and existing components of One Solution, such as REEIS, CREEMS, and CRIS.

The goal of requiring all CSREES investments to be reported into a One Solution system beginning FY 2007 is being discussed. Contact: Greg Crosby, USDA/CSREES - **gcrosby@csrees.usda.gov**.

Rural Families Speak: CSREES-Funded Multistate Longitudinal Research Project Tracks the Well-Being and Function of Rural Low Income Families in an Era of Welfare Reform

Tracking changes in rural families across time is vital in the face of changing economic conditions and federal and state policies related to public assistance. Scant data on rural families' post-welfare-reform well-being continues with regard to food security and use of support systems.

The Rural Families Speak project adds to the multidimensional understanding of rural low-income families over time. It is a Multistate Longitudinal Research Project began as NC-223 in 1998. The current project, NC-1011, involves 18 states and 414 families. The overall purpose of the on-going research is to assess changes in the well-being and functioning of rural families in the context of policies that reform welfare.

The study includes multicultural mothers age 18 and older with at least one child 12 years old or younger, currently eligible for, or receiving, Food Stamps, or Women Infants and Children (WIC) Program transfers. By combining data across the states, social science researchers are beginning to identify common forces affecting many rural people and counties in relation to welfare policies. Information on the project including briefs, articles, theses, and dissertations resulting from three waves of data collection is located at **http://www.ruralfamilies.umn.edu/.** Contact: Caroline Crocoll, USDA/CSREES – **ccrocoll@csrees.usda.gov.**

IRM Back in Biotech Risk RFA

Last year the Biotechnology Risk Assessment Research Grants Program did not support research on insect resistance management (IRM) because of stakeholder input and coverage by other programs. This year, after consultation with agency program leaders, other agencies, and several multistate research groups, CSREES put IRM back into the Biotech Risk Request for Applications because IRM research is not well covered by other programs, and regulatory agencies are still interested in seeing it funded. In order to be funded, new IRM proposals to the Biotech Risk program must demonstrate a connection with biotechnology risk to distinguish them from product stewardship. Contact: Dan Jones, USDA/CSREES – **djones@csrees.usda.gov.**

Grants.gov Update

CSREES continues to move forward with its implementation of Grants.gov. In FY 2006, CSREES is planning to provide the option to submit applications for the Biotechnology Risk Assessment Research Grants Program through Grants.gov. Potential applicants to this program are encouraged to ensure their institutions are registered with Grants.gov. CSREES is also working with Auburn University, Cornell University, Montana State University, North Carolina A&T University, and the University of Wisconsin to submit applications to several specific programs throughout FY 2006. CSREES plans to provide electronic submission for all programs in FY 2007 via Grants.gov. To learn more about Grants.gov visit: **www.grants.gov.** Contact: Jason Hitchcock, USDA/CSREES - **jhitchcock@csrees.usda.gov.**

CSREES Helps Fund Upcoming National Workshop on Agricultural Air Quality Issues:

A workshop on agricultural air quality issues will be held June 5-8, 2006, at the Bolger Conference Center in Potomac, MD. A CSREES National Research Initiative grant to North Carolina State University is funding the workshop. The goals of the workshop will be to assess the state of the science, enhance our knowledge, foster multidisciplinary communication and recommend changes, and improvements in tools and practices. Oral and poster presentations will update current and emerging knowledge about agricultural air quality science and policy, as well as innovative ideas, processes, and programs by which to optimize agricultural production and environmental protection. Registration opened in November and can be completed online at **www.esa.org/Airworkshop**. Contact: Ray Knighton, USDA/CSREES - **rknighton@csrees.usda.gov.**

CSREES Helps Fund the Upcoming Youth Technology Leadership Conference

CSREES is a major supporter of the upcoming 2006 4-H Youth Technology Conference, scheduled for July 22-28, 2006, in Lincoln, NE. Conference content will emphasize the integration of science, engineering and technology learning into the 4-H projects. State delegation of youth and their adult leaders will break out into the focus areas which will include: remote sensing, computer-based animation, fine and performing arts, plant genetics, engineering, entrepreneurship, forensic science, emergency management and response, textiles and food technology. State delegations will return home with action plans to help them increase the integration of science, engineering, and technology learning into their 4-H youth programs. Contact Tom Tate, USDA/CSREES - **ttate@csrees.usda.gov.**

National Initiative to Internationalize Extension

Begun 3 years ago, the project has coalesced support and developed new approaches to help extension serve its clientele in an increasingly global society. Economic competition, changing demographics, invasive species, international trade agreements, and environmental concerns are just some of the issues that know no national boundaries.

In FY 2006, CSREES and its university partners will work closely with the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC), the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP), the Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP), Epsilon Sigma Phi and other extension associations to incorporate a more global perspective into the System. Presentations are planned at upcoming national, regional, and state conferences, including the Extension Directors/Administrators conference scheduled for February 2006 in Albuquerque.

CSREES will provide leadership on:

- establishing international extension liaisons in every state,
- enhancing Web-based resources for use nationwide,
- sharing innovative, cost-effective approaches to internationalizing extension,
- using cross-cultural competencies to improve outreach to new immigrant populations,
- further integrating activities with university research and teaching programs, and
- demonstrating tangible benefits to local clientele from an increased understanding of global interdependence.

Contact Mike McGirr, USDA/CSREES - **mmcgirr@csrees.usda.gov**.

Upcoming CSREES-Sponsored National Water Conference

The National Water Conference, sponsored and hosted by USDA-CSREES, will provide opportunities for water resource professionals engaged in research, extension, and education to share knowledge and ideas, identify and update emerging issues, and network with the CSREES National Water Program and partner organizations. USDA REE Deputy Under Secretary Merle Pierson is scheduled to speak. Scheduled for February 5-9, 2006, in San Antonio,TX, regional leaders and nationally known experts will address current and future water resource management and security issues, including water-borne pathogens, nutrient contamination, partitioning of available water for different needs, social and behavioral dimensions to water use, and rural drinking water quality. For conference information visit: **http://www.soil.ncsu.edu/swetc/waterconf/2006/main.htm.** Contact: Mike O'Neill, USDA/CSREES - **moneill@csrees.usda.gov.**

Special Session at Annual Meeting of American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Will Address Lessons Learned from Hurricane Katrina

At the June 22-25, 2006, American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) annual meeting in Charlotte, NC, Anna-Mae Kobbe, director of family consumer sciences and nutrition, will moderate a session on experiences dealing with the aftermath of recent hurricane devastation. The conference theme is "Solutions for Thriving in Threatening Times." The session will provide for an exchange of information about the impact of the disaster and the lessons learned that could enhance future preparedness and response. AAFCS members include K-12 teachers, university faculty, extension educators, and corporate executives. Contact: Anna Mae Kobbe, USDA-CSREES, **akobbe@csrees.usda.gov.**