

location for maintaining organizational information for organizations seeking and receiving grants from the Government. Such organizations must register in the CCR prior to the submission of applications via grants.gov (a DUNS number is needed for CCR registration). For information about how to register in the CCR visit "Get Started" in the Web site, <http://www.grants.gov>. Allow a minimum of 5 days to complete the CCR registration.

E. A Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS)

A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of over 70 million businesses worldwide. A **Federal Register** notice of final policy issuance (68 FR 38402) requires a DUNS number in every application (*i.e.*, hard copy and electronic) for a grant or cooperative agreement. Therefore, potential applicants should verify that they have a DUNS number or take the steps needed to obtain one. For information about how to obtain a DUNS number go to <http://www.grants.gov>. Please note that the registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.

Dated: May 19, 2004.

Ross J. Davidson, Jr.,
Manager, Federal Crop Insurance Corporation.

[FR Doc. 04-11616 Filed 5-21-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-08-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Federal Crop Insurance Corporation

Funding Opportunity Title: Crop Insurance Education in Targeted States (Targeted States Program)

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: Competitive Cooperative Agreements—Initial.

CFDA NUMBER: 10.458.

DATES: Applications are due 5 p.m. e.d.t., July 8, 2004.

SUMMARY: The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC), operating through the Risk Management Agency (RMA), announces the availability of approximately \$4.5 million to fund cooperative agreements under the Crop Insurance Education in Targeted States program (the Targeted States program). The purpose of this cooperative agreement program is to deliver crop insurance education and information to U.S. agricultural producers in certain States that have been designated as historically underserved with respect to crop insurance. The states, collectively referred to as Targeted States, are

Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming. A maximum of 15 cooperative agreements will be funded, one in each of the 15 Targeted States. The maximum award for varies by State. Recipients of awards must agree to the substantial involvement of RMA in the project. Funding availability for this program may be announced at approximately the same time as funding availability for similar but separate programs—CFDA No. 10.455 (Community Outreach and Assistance Partnerships), CFDA No. 10.456 (Risk Management Research Partnerships), and CFDA No. 10.457 (Commodity Partnerships for Risk Management Education). Prospective applicants should carefully examine and compare the notices for each program.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Legislative Authority

The Targeted States program is authorized under section 524(a)(2) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (Act).

Background

RMA promotes and regulates sound risk management solutions to improve the economic stability of American agriculture. On behalf of FCIC, RMA does this by offering Federal crop insurance products through a network of private-sector partners, overseeing the creation of new risk management products, seeking enhancements in existing products, ensuring the integrity of crop insurance programs, offering outreach programs aimed at equal access and participation of underserved communities, and providing risk management education and information.

One of RMA's strategic goals is to ensure that its customers are well informed as to the risk management solutions available. This educational goal is supported by section 524(a)(2) of the Act. This section authorizes funding for the establishment of crop insurance education and information programs in States that have historically been underserved by Federal crop insurance program. In accordance with the Act, the fifteen States designated as "underserved" are Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming (collectively referred to as "Targeted States").

Project Goal

The goal of the Targeted States program is to ensure that farmers and ranchers in the Targeted States are sufficiently informed so as to take full advantage of existing and emerging crop insurance products.

Purpose

The purpose of the Targeted States program is to provide farmers and ranchers in Targeted States with education and information to be able to understand:

- The kinds of risk addressed by crop insurance;
- The features of existing and emerging crop insurance products;
- The use of crop insurance in the management of risk; and
- How the use of crop insurance can affect other risk management decisions, such as the use of marketing and financial tools.

Each cooperative agreement awarded through this program will provide the recipient with funds, guidance, and the substantial involvement of RMA to carry out a program to achieve this purpose in a Targeted State.

For some farms in Targeted States, existing crop insurance products are either not available or require enhancements to provide effective protection. The Act envisions new and enhanced insurance products that will meet the needs of these farmers and ranchers. Until these new products are available, producers will benefit from an educational program that provides an understanding of crop insurance and the basic skills required for making a sound crop insurance decision.

RMA envisions that most training and informational activities under these cooperative agreements will be conducted during the November 2004 through March 2005 period, which will be an effective time to reach many agricultural producers with educational programs. However, activities are not restricted to this time period because certain groups of producers might benefit from a different schedule of educational activities. RMA anticipates that project leaders will have sufficient time to organize and schedule events, commit funds to reserve event facilities, gather materials, raise awareness, and otherwise make the preparations needed to ensure good producer participation in all planned educational activities. Most of all, RMA anticipates that project leaders will prepare by fostering the cooperation and active support of organizations with close ties to local producers. Support from such organizations is essential in influencing

local producers to participate in the type of activities envisioned in this educational program. Ideal partners would include public and private agricultural organizations in the Targeted State with a stake in ensuring that agricultural producers have increased knowledge and skill in the use of crop insurance. RMA encourages applicants to specifically address the needs of beginning farmers and ranchers as an important element of the project.

RMA also envisions that applicants will have the capacity to deliver crop insurance education and information to agricultural producers in the Targeted State. Capacity includes the ability to create and gather instructional and informational materials; organize and operate educational activities for producers and agribusiness leaders; broadly promote the availability of risk management educational opportunities; and clearly and thoroughly document results achieved by the project. Applicants should apply for funding for that Targeted State where applicant intends on delivering educational activities.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreements, which require the substantial involvement of RMA.

Funding Availability: Approximately \$4,500,000 is available in fiscal year 2004 to fund up to 15 cooperative agreements, a maximum of one agreement for each of the Targeted States. The maximum funding amount anticipated for each Targeted State's agreement is as follows:

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Maine | \$225,000 |
| New Hampshire | 173,000 |
| Vermont | 226,000 |
| Connecticut | 225,000 |
| Rhode Island | 157,000 |
| Massachusetts | 209,000 |
| New York | 617,000 |
| New Jersey | 272,000 |
| Pennsylvania | 754,000 |
| Maryland | 370,000 |
| Delaware | 261,000 |
| West Virginia | 209,000 |
| Nevada | 208,000 |
| Utah | 301,000 |
| Wyoming | 293,000 |
| Total | 4,500,000 |

Funding amounts were determined by first allocating an equal amount of \$150,000 to each Targeted State. Remaining funds were allocated on a pro rata basis according to each Targeted State's share of 2000 agricultural cash receipts relative to the total for all Targeted States. Both allocations were totaled for each Targeted State and rounded to the nearest \$1,000.

In the event that additional funds become available under this program or in the event that no application for a given Targeted State is recommended for funding by the evaluation panel, these additional funds may, at the discretion of the Manager of FCIC, be allocated pro-rata to State award recipients by agreement between RMA and the award recipient for use in broadening the size or scope of awarded projects within the Targeted State. In the event that the Manager of FCIC determines that available RMA resources cannot support the administrative and substantial involvement requirements of all agreements recommended for funding, the Manager may elect to fund fewer agreements than the available funding might otherwise allow. It is expected that the awards will be made approximately 60 days after the application deadline. All awards will be made and agreements finalized no later than September 30, 2004.

Substantial involvement requirement: Targeted States serviced by RMA Regional Offices are listed below. Staff from the respective RMA Regional Offices will provide substantial involvement for Targeted States projects conducted within respective Regions. Billings, MT Regional Office: (WY) Davis, CA Regional Office: (NV and UT) Raleigh, NC Regional Office: (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, PA, MD, DE, and WV)

Applicants must designate in their application narrative the Targeted State where crop insurance educational activities for the project will be directed. Applicants may apply to deliver education to producers in more than one Targeted State, but a separate application must be submitted for each Targeted State.

Maximum Award: Any application that requests Federal funding of more than the amount listed above for a project in a given Targeted State will be rejected.

Project Period: Projects will be funded for a period of up to one year from the project starting date.

Description of Agreement Award

Recipient Tasks

In conducting activities to achieve the purpose and goal of this program in a designated Targeted State, the award recipient will be responsible for performing the following tasks:

- Finalize and provide specific details for the Statement of Work (Form RME-2). The Statement of Work must describe the specific manner in which various subtasks for the project will be

completed, the dates by which each task will be completed, the specific locations for all promotional and educational activities, and the partners that will have responsibility for each task and subtask. Task milestones must be listed in a way that ensures that progress can be measured at various stages throughout the life of the project. The Statement of Work must also provide for the substantial involvement of RMA in the project. All cooperative agreements resulting from this announcement will include Statements of Work based on Form RME-2. All applicants must use this format for proposing Statements of Work.

- Assemble instructional materials appropriate for crop insurance education and information within the designated Targeted State. This will include: (a) Gathering existing instructional materials that meet the local needs of agricultural producers; (b) identifying gaps in existing instructional materials; and (c) developing new materials or modifying existing instructional materials to fill existing gaps.

- Develop and conduct a promotional program. This program will include activities using media, newsletters, publications, or other appropriate informational dissemination techniques that are designed to: (a) Raise awareness for crop insurance; (b) inform producers of the availability of crop insurance; and (c) inform producers and agribusiness leaders in the designated Targeted State of training and informational opportunities.

- Deliver crop insurance training and informational opportunities to agricultural producers and agribusiness professionals in the designated Targeted State. This will include organizing and delivering educational activities using the instructional materials identified earlier. Activities should be directed primarily to agricultural producers, but may include those agribusiness professionals that have frequent opportunities to advise producers on crop insurance tools and decisions.

- Document all educational activities conducted under the cooperative agreement and the results of such activities, including criteria and indicators used to evaluate the success of the program. The recipient will also be required to provide information to an RMA-selected contractor to evaluate all educational activities and advise RMA as to the effectiveness of activities.

RMA Activities

FCIC, working through RMA, will be substantially involved in each project through one of RMA's Regional Offices.

Substantial involvement includes, but is not limited to, specific review and approval authorities in the management and direction of the project. RMA will provide substantial involvement for the projects through the activities listed below.

- Review and approve in advance the recipient's Statement of Work.

- Collaborate with the recipient in assembling crop insurance instructional materials for producers in the designated Targeted State. This will include: (a) Reviewing and approving in advance all educational materials for technical accuracy; (b) serving on instructional material development workgroups; (c) providing the project leadership with fact sheets and other risk management publications that have been prepared by RMA; (d) advising the project leader on the materials available over the internet through the AgRisk Education Library; (e) advising the project leader on technical issues related to crop insurance instructional materials; and (f) advising the project leader on the use of the standardized design and layout formats to be used on program materials.

- Collaborate with the recipient on a promotional program for raising awareness for crop insurance and for informing producers of training and informational opportunities in the Targeted State. This will include: (a) Reviewing and approving in advance all promotional plans, materials, and programs; (b) serving on workgroups that plan promotional programs; (c) advising the applicant on technical issues relating to the presentation of crop insurance products in promotional materials; and (d) participating, as appropriate, in media programs designed to raise general awareness or provide farmers with risk management education.

- Collaborate with the recipient on the delivery of education to producers and agribusiness leaders in the Targeted State. This will include: (a) Reviewing and approving in advance all producer and agribusiness leader educational activities; (b) advising the project leader on technical issues related to crop insurance education and information; and (c) assisting the project leader in informing crop insurance professionals about educational activity plans and scheduled meetings.

- Review and approve recipient's documentation of crop insurance educational activities.

Other Tasks

In addition to the specific, required tasks listed above, the applicant may propose additional tasks that would

contribute directly to the purpose of this program. For any proposed additional task, the applicant must identify the objective of the task, the specific subtasks required to meet the objective, specific time lines for performing the subtasks, and the specific responsibilities of partners. The applicant must also identify specific ways in which RMA would have substantial involvement in the proposed project task.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include State departments of agriculture, universities, non-profit agricultural organizations, and other public or private organizations with the capacity to lead a local program of crop insurance education for farmers and ranchers within a Targeted State. Individuals are eligible applicants. Although an applicant may be eligible to compete for an award based on its status as an eligible entity, other factors may exclude an applicant from receiving Federal assistance under this program (e.g., debarment and suspension; a determination of non-performance on a prior contract, cooperative agreement, grant or partnership; a determination of a violation of applicable ethical standards).

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

This program has neither a cost sharing nor a matching requirement.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address To Request Application Package

Program application materials for the Targeted States program under this announcement may be downloaded from the RMA Web site at: <http://www.rma.usda.gov>. Applicants may also request application materials from: Michelle Fuller, USDA-RMA-RME, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Stop 0808, (Portals Bldg., Suite 508), Washington, DC 20250-0808, phone: (202) 720-6356, fax: (202) 690-3605, e-mail: Michelle.Fuller@wdc.usda.gov.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

A complete and valid application package must include an electronic copy (Microsoft Word format preferred) of the narrative portions (Form RME 1 and RME 2) of the application package on diskette or compact disc and an original and two copies of the completed and signed application must be submitted in one package at the time

of initial submission. Each application package must be unbound and unstapled, held together only by rubber bands or metal clips and not bound in any other way. RMA would appreciate receiving seven additional unbound copies to facilitate the panel review process (ten applications in all), which must include the following:

1. A completed and signed OMB Standard Form 424, "Application for Federal Assistance."

2. A completed and signed OMB Standard Form 424-A, "Budget Information—Non-construction Programs." Indirect costs allowed for projects submitted under this announcement will be limited to ten (10) percent of the total direct cost of the partnership or cooperative agreement. Federal funding requested (the total of direct and indirect costs) must not exceed the maximum level for the respective Targeted State, as specified in Section II, Award Information.

3. A completed and signed OMB Standard Form 424-B, "Assurances, Non-constructive Programs."

4. Risk Management Education Project Narrative (Form RME-1). Complete all required parts of Form RME-1: Part I—Title Page.

Part II—A written narrative of no more than 10 single-sided pages which will provide reviewers with sufficient information to effectively evaluate the merits of the application according to the evaluation criteria listed in this notice. Although a Statement of Work, which is the second evaluation criterion, is to be completed in detail in RME Form-2, applicants may wish to highlight certain unique features of the Statement of Work in Part II for the benefit of the evaluation panel. If your narrative exceeds the page limit, only the first 10 pages will be reviewed.

- 12 point, unreduced font size.
- 8.5 by 11 inch paper.
- One-inch margins on each page.

Part III—A Budget Narrative, describing how the categorical costs listed on SF 424-A are derived.

Part IV—(Not required for Targeted States Program).

5. "Statement of Work," (Form RME-2), which identifies tasks and subtasks in detail, expected completion dates and deliverables, and RMA's substantial involvement role for the proposed project.

6. (Optional) An optional appendix containing project participant resumes, letters of partnership support, or other materials that the applicant believes will directly support the information provided in the narrative. Applicants should not seek letters of partnership support from RMA Regional Offices

because these offices will automatically provide substantial involvement in all projects that are awarded funding.

7. A completed and signed OMB Standard Form LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities."

8. A completed and signed AD-1047, "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters—Primary Covered Transactions."

9. A completed and signed AD-1049, "Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace."

3. Submission Dates and Times

Applications Deadline: 5 p.m. e.d.t., July 8, 2004. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that RMA receives a complete application package by the closing date and time. Incomplete or late application packages will not receive further consideration.

4. Intergovernmental Review

Not applicable.

5. Funding Restrictions

Cooperative agreement funds may not be used to:

a. Plan, repair, rehabilitate, acquire, or construct a building or facility including a processing facility;

b. Purchase, rent, or install fixed equipment;

c. Repair or maintain privately owned vehicles;

d. Pay for the preparation of the partnership or cooperative agreement application;

e. Fund political activities;

f. Pay costs incurred prior to receiving a partnership or cooperative agreement;

g. Fund any activities prohibited in 7 CFR parts 3015 and 3019, as applicable.

6. Other Submission Requirements

Mailed submissions: Applications submitted through express, overnight mail or another delivery service will be considered as meeting the announced deadline if they are received in the mailroom at the address stated below for express, overnight mail or another delivery service on or before the deadline. Applicants are cautioned that express, overnight mail or other delivery services do not always deliver as agreed. Applicants should take this into account because failure of such delivery services will not extend the deadline. Mailed applications will be considered as meeting the announced deadline if they are received on or before the deadline in the mailroom at the address stated below for mailed applications.

Applicants are responsible for mailing applications well in advance, to ensure that applications are received on or

before the deadline time and date. Applicants using the U.S. Postal Service should allow for the extra time for delivery due to the additional security measures that mail delivered to government offices in the Washington, DC, area requires.

Address when using private delivery services or when hand delivering: Attention: Risk Management Education Program, USDA/RMA, Suite 508, 1250 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20024.

Address when using U.S. Postal Service: Attention: Risk Management Education Program, USDA/RMA, Stop 0808, 1400 Independence Ave, SW., Washington, DC 20250-0808.

Electronic submissions: Although the application package may be downloaded electronically, RMA cannot accommodate transmissions of application submissions by facsimile or through other electronic media. Therefore, applications transmitted electronically will not be accepted regardless of the date or time of submission or the time of receipt.

Acknowledgement of Applications

Receipt of applications will be acknowledged by e-mail, whenever possible. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to provide e-mail addresses in their applications. If an e-mail address is not indicated on an application, receipt will be acknowledged by letter. There will be no notification of incomplete, unqualified or unfunded applications until the awards have been made. When received by RMA, applications will be assigned an identification number. This number will be communicated to applicants in the acknowledgement of receipt of applications. An application's identification number should be referenced in all correspondence regarding the application. If the applicant does not receive an acknowledgement within 15 days of the submission deadline, the applicant should notify RMA at the point of contact indicated in Section VII, Agency Contact.

V. Application Review Information

1. Criteria

Applications submitted under the Targeted States program will be evaluated within each Targeted State according to the following criteria:

Project Benefits—Maximum 35 Points

The applicant must demonstrate that the project benefits to farmers and ranchers warrant the funding requested. Applicants will be scored according to

the extent they can: (a) Reasonably estimate the number of producers reached through the various educational activities described in the Statement of Work; (b) justify such estimates with clear specifics; (c) identify the actions producers will likely be able to take as a result of the activities described in the Statement of Work; and (d) identify the specific measures for evaluating results that will be employed in the project. Reviewers' scoring will be based on the scope and reasonableness of the applicant's estimates of producers reached through the project, clear descriptions of specific expected project benefits, and well-designed methods for measuring the project's results and effectiveness.

Statement of Work—Maximum 35 Points

The applicant must produce a clear and specific Statement of Work for the project. For each of the tasks contained in the Description of Agreement Award (refer to Section II Award Information), the applicant must identify and describe specific subtasks, responsible entities, expected completion dates, RMA roles, and deliverables that will further the purpose of this program. Applicants will obtain a higher score to the extent that the Statement of Work is specific, measurable, reasonable, has specific deadlines for the completion of subtasks, relates directly to the required activities and the program purpose described in this announcement, and is sensitive to the needs of producers that are small, have limited resources, are minorities, or are beginning in a farming or ranching business. Applicants are required to submit this Statement of Work on Form RME-2.

Partnering—Maximum 15 Points

The applicant must demonstrate experience and capacity to partner with and gain the support of grower organizations, agribusiness professionals, and agricultural leaders to carry out a local program of education and information in a designated Targeted State. Applicants will receive higher scores to the extent that they can document and demonstrate: (a) That partnership commitments are in place for the express purpose of delivering the program in this announcement; (b) that a broad group of farmers and ranchers will be reached within the Targeted State; and (c) that a substantial effort has been made to partner with organizations that can meet the needs of producers that are small, have limited resources, are minorities, or are beginning farmers and ranchers.

Project Management—Maximum 15 Points

The applicant must demonstrate an ability to implement sound and effective project management practices. Higher scores will be awarded to applicants that can demonstrate organizational skills, leadership, and experience in delivering services or programs that assist agricultural producers in the respective Targeted State. If the applicant has been a recipient of other Federal or other government grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts, the applicant must also detail that they have consistently complied with financial and program reporting and auditing requirements. Applicants that will employ, or have access to, personnel who have experience in directing local educational programs that benefit agricultural producers will receive higher rankings.

2. Review and Selection Process

Applications will be evaluated using a two-part process. First, each application will be screened by RMA personnel to ensure that it meets the requirements in this announcement. Applications that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or are incomplete will not receive further consideration. Applications that meet announcement requirements will be sorted into the Targeted State in which the applicant proposes to conduct the project and will be presented to a review panel for consideration.

Second, the review panel will meet to consider and discuss the merits of each application. The panel will consist of not less than three independent reviewers. Reviewers will be drawn from USDA, other Federal agencies, and others representing public and private organizations, as needed. After considering the merits of all applications within a Targeted State, panel members will score each application according to the criteria and point values listed above. The panel will then rank each application against others within the Targeted State according to the scores received. A lottery will be used to resolve any instances of a tie score that might have a bearing on funding recommendations. If such a lottery is required, the names of all tied applicants will be entered into a drawing. The first tied applicant drawn will have priority over other tied applicants for funding consideration.

The review panel will report to the Manager of FCIC on the results of the evaluation. The panel's report will include the recommended applicants to receive cooperative agreements for each

Targeted State. At its discretion, the panel may recommend that the Manager not provide funding for an application receiving a score less than 50.

An organization, or group of organizations in partnership, may apply for funding under other FCIC or RMA programs, in addition to the program described in this announcement. However, if the Manager of FCIC determines that an application recommended for funding is sufficiently similar to a project that has been funded or has been recommended to be funded under another RMA or FCIC program, then the Manager may elect to not fund that application in whole or in part. The Manager of FCIC will make the final determination on those applications that will be awarded funding.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices

Following approval by the awarding official of RMA of the applications to be selected for funding, project leaders whose applications have been selected for funding will be notified. Within the limit of funds available for such a purpose, the awarding official of RMA shall enter into cooperative agreements with those applicants. The agreements provide the amount of Federal funds for use in the project period, the terms and conditions of the award, and the time period for the project. The effective date of the agreement shall be on the date the agreement is executed by both parties and it shall remain in effect for up to one year or through September 30, 2005, whichever is later.

After a cooperative agreement has been signed, RMA will extend to award recipients, in writing, the authority to draw down funds for the purpose of conducting the activities listed in the agreement. All funds provided to the applicant by FCIC must be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are obligated in accordance with the approved agreement and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, and the applicability of Federal cost principles. No commitment of Federal assistance beyond the project period is made or implied for any award resulting from this notice.

Notification of denial of funding will be sent to applicants after final funding decisions have been made. Reasons for denial of funding can include, but are not limited to, incomplete applications, applications with evaluation scores below 50, or applications with evaluation scores that are lower than those of other applications in a Targeted State.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Requirement To Use Program Logo

Applicants awarded cooperative agreements will be required to use a program logo and design provided by RMA for all instructional and promotional materials.

Requirement To Provide Project Information to an RMA-Selected Contractor

Applicants awarded cooperative agreements will be required to assist RMA in evaluating the effectiveness of its educational programs by providing documentation of educational activities and related information to any contractor selected by RMA for program evaluation purposes.

Private Crop Insurance Organizations and Potential Conflicts of Interest

Private organizations that are involved in the sale of Federal crop insurance, or that have financial ties to such organizations, are eligible to apply for funding under this announcement. However, such entities will not be allowed to receive funding to conduct activities that would otherwise be required under a Standard Reinsurance Agreement or any other agreement in effect between FCIC and the entity. Also, such entities will not be allowed to receive funding to conduct activities that could be perceived by producers as promoting one company's services or products over another's. If applying for funding, such organizations are encouraged to be sensitive to potential conflicts of interest and to describe in their application the specific actions they will take to avoid actual and perceived conflicts of interest.

Access to Panel Review Information

Upon written request from the applicant, scores from the evaluation panel, not including the identity of reviewers, will be sent to the applicant after the review and awards process has been completed.

Confidential Aspects of Proposals and Awards

The names of applicants, the names of individuals identified in the applications, the content of applications, and the panel evaluations of applications will all be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of review panel members will remain confidential throughout the entire review process and will not be released to applicants. At the end of the

fiscal year, names of panel members will be made available. However, panelists will not be identified with the review of any particular application. When an application results in a cooperative agreement, that agreement becomes a part of the official record of RMA transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary of Agriculture 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 be considered confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within an application, including the basis for such designation. The original copy of a proposal that does not result in an award will be retained by RMA for a period of one year. Other copies will be destroyed. Copies of proposals not receiving awards will be released only with the express written consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. A proposal may be withdrawn at any time prior to award.

Audit Requirements

Applicants awarded cooperative agreements are subject to audit.

Prohibitions and Requirements With Regard To Lobbying

Section 1352 of Public Law 101-121, enacted on October 23, 1989, imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of Federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans. It provides exemptions for Indian Tribes and tribal organizations. Current and prospective recipients, and any subcontractors, are prohibited from using Federal funds, other than profits from a Federal contract, for lobbying Congress or any Federal agency in connection with the award of a contract, grant, cooperative agreement, or loan. In addition, for each award action in excess of \$100,000 (\$150,000 for loans) the law requires recipients and any subcontractors: (1) To certify that they have neither used nor will use any appropriated funds for payment of lobbyists; (2) to disclose the name, address, payment details, and purpose of any agreements with lobbyists whom recipients of their subcontractors will pay with profits or other nonappropriated funds on or after December 22, 1989; and (3) to file quarterly up-dates about the use of lobbyists if material changes occur in their use. The law establishes civil penalties for non-compliance. A copy of the certification and disclosure forms must be submitted with the application

and are available at the address and telephone number listed in Section VII. Agency Contact.

Applicable OMB Circulars

All cooperative agreements funded as a result of this notice will be subject to the requirements contained in all applicable OMB circulars.

Requirement To Participate in Civil Rights Training

Project leaders of all cooperative agreements funded as a result of this notice are required to know and abide by Federal civil rights laws. Agency policies or regulations may require that project leaders attend civil rights training to become fully aware of civil rights responsibilities. In their applications, applicants should budget for possible travel costs associated with receiving this training.

3. Reporting

Applicants awarded cooperative agreements will be required to submit quarterly progress and financial reports (OMB Standard Form 269) throughout the project period, as well as a final program and financial report not later than 90 days after the end of the project period.

VII. Agency Contact

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact: Michelle Fuller, USDA-RMA-RME, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Stop 0808, (Portals Bldg., Suite 508), Washington, DC 20250-0808, phone: 202-720-6356, fax: 202-690-3605, e-mail: Michelle.Fuller@wdc.usda.gov. You may also obtain information regarding this announcement from the RMA Web site at: <http://www.rma.usda.gov>.

VIII. Other Information

Related Programs

Funding availability for this program may be announced at approximately the same time as funding availability for similar but separate programs—CFDA No. 10.455 (Community Outreach and Assistance Partnerships), CFDA No. 10.456 (Risk Management Research Partnerships), and CFDA No. 10.457 (Commodity Partnerships for Risk Management Education). These programs have some similarities, but also key differences. The differences stem from important features of each program's authorizing legislation and different RMA objectives. Prospective applicants should carefully examine and compare the notices for each program.

Dated: May 19, 2004.

Ross J. Davidson, Jr.,

Manager, Federal Crop Insurance Corporation.

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BILLING CODE 3410-08-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Federal Crop Insurance Corporation

Request for Applications (RFA): Research and Development Risk Management Research Partnerships

Announcement Type: Announcement of availability of funds and request for application for risk management research partnerships.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (CFDA): 10.456.

DATES: The closing date and time for receipt of an application is 5 p.m. c.d.t. on July 8, 2004. Applications received after the deadline will not be evaluated by the technical review panel and will not be considered for funding. All awards will be made and agreements completed no later than September 30, 2004.

Overview: The purpose of the Risk Management Research Partnerships is to fund the development of non-insurance risk management tools that will be utilized by agricultural producers to assist them in mitigating the risks inherent in agricultural production. The proposals must address at least one of the seven objectives listed in part I.D. Approximately \$4 million is available to fund an undetermined number of partnerships. Applications are accepted from public and private entities; individuals are not eligible to apply. No cost sharing by the applicant is required. There are no limitations on the number of applications each applicant may submit.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Background

RMA is committed to meeting the risk management needs and improving or developing risk management tools for the nation's farmers and ranchers. It does this by offering Federal crop insurance and other risk management products and tools through a network of private-sector entities and by overseeing the creation of new products, seeking enhancements in existing products, and by expanding the use of a variety of risk management tools. Risk management tools include a variety of risk management options and strategies developed to assist producers in mitigating the risks inherent in agricultural production. Risk