

**U.S. EPA, Region 2
Strategic Agricultural Initiative
Request for Proposals FY 2008**

AGENCY NAME: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2; Division of Enforcement and Compliance Assistance, Pesticides and Toxics Substance Branch

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NAME: Strategic Agricultural Initiative: FY08 Request for Proposals

ANNOUNCEMENT NUMBER: EPA-R2-DECA-PTSB-07-01

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NUMBER: CFDA 66.716 – Surveys, Studies, Demonstrations, Educational Outreach, and Special Projects

Overview

Notice of Request for Proposals for Projects to be Funded from the Division of Enforcement and Compliance Assistance, Pesticides and Toxics Substance Branch, Strategic Agricultural Initiative Grant (CFDA 66.716 - Surveys, Studies, Demonstrations, Educational Outreach, and Special Projects)

Proposal due date:	November 9, 2007
If selected, due date for application	Four weeks from notification of successful proposal

Executive Summary

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 2 is soliciting proposals to help implement the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) and to support efforts by the agricultural community to “transition” away from high risk pesticides (Organophosphates, Carbamates, and Fumigants) to the use of less and reduced risk pesticides, alternative methods of agricultural pest control, and sustainable practices in food production. The program supports grants for education, extension, demonstration, and studies for FQPA transition and reduced risk practices for pest management in agriculture.

All proposals must be received at the EPA Region 2 (Edison, NJ) office or submitted via Grants.gov no later than **5:00 P.M. EDT on November 9, 2007.**

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Background

The statutory authority for this grant program is under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Section 20, and the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), Section 10, as amended by Public Law 106-74. These statutory authorities can be found here:

[FIFRA Section 20](#)
[TSCA Section 10](#)
[Public Law 106–74 106th Congress](#)

The Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), passed by Congress in 1996, establishes health based standards for pesticide residues in raw and processed food. It is intended to protect public health from exposure to pesticides and to create an environment favorable for the development and adoption of lower risk, effective crop protection tools for U.S. agriculture. The EPA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and numerous agricultural organizations are working on efforts to implement the FQPA. For this effort, EPA established regional programs for FQPA implementation and partnership activities to reduce risks and use of pesticides in agriculture. For more background information on FQPA, visit the EPA website at <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/regulating/laws/fqpa/>.

The general award and administration process is governed by regulations at 40 CFR part 30 (“Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations”) and 40 CFR part 31 (“Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments”) as applicable.

B. Environmentally Sound Pest Management: Priorities for Consideration

EPA Region 2 will award a project under this announcement that will result in the transition by growers to more environmentally sound pest management practices. In order to accomplish this, the Strategic Agricultural Initiative (SAI) Grant Program will give priority consideration to projects that:

- Include a “whole systems” approach by integrating pest, soil, water and crop management practices;
- Address minor/specialty crops;
- Focus on sustainable agriculture (defined as farming practices that are environmentally sound, economically viable, and socially responsible);
- Are submitted by applicants that have a proven track record of grower participation and adoption of sustainable pest management practices; and
- Have an outreach and extension component to their program.

Projects must also address one or more of the following goals for the FQPA SAI:

- Utilize demonstration projects, outreach, and/or education to increase the adoption of reduced risk/integrated pest management (IPM) practices that provide alternatives to the use of highly toxic pesticides (Organophosphates, Carbamates, and Fumigants), pesticides impacted negatively by FQPA decisions;
- Encourage partnerships between producers, commodity groups, scientists, extension, local/state/federal government agencies, and other stakeholders to demonstrate, promote, and utilize reduced risk/IPM practices in the field;
- Actively engage scientists, producers, industry, and local/state/federal partners in the specifics of implementing FQPA;

- Quantitatively measure and document the effects of using the reduced risk/IPM programs on the environment, human health and community;
- Facilitate a sustainable whole farm systems approach that utilizes reduced risk/IPM practices; and
- Demonstrate region specific pest management practices and integrated crop management systems to replace pesticide uses that may be cancelled under FQPA.

C. Environmental Results

All applicants are required to link their projects to environmental results. Environmental results are used as a way to gauge a project's performance using output and outcome measures and to show the project's linkage to the EPA Strategic Plan.

Outcomes *Outcome measures* are environmental improvements that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. These improvements are changes, benefits, effects or consequences to the environment that are a result from the accomplishment of activities, efforts and outputs. Projected environmental improvement outcomes can be over the short (changes in learning, knowledge, attitude, skills), intermediate (changes in behavior, practice, decisions), or long term (changes in condition of the natural resource). Some longer-term outcomes may occur after the proposed project closes. Through the SAI Grant Program, EPA expects to: 1) increase the number of growers using reduced risk/IPM tools and techniques; 2) measure quantitative and qualitative reduction in the use of higher risk pesticides or pesticides in general; 3) encourage partnerships between crop producers, EPA, other federal/state/local agencies, and other interested stakeholders to implement reduced risk/IPM programs; 4) acres impacted by the project under management that include pesticide risk reduction practices; 5) measure the change in level of pest management based on the SAI Transition Gradient; and 6) percent reduction or pound per acre reduction expected in the use of highly toxic active ingredients.

Outputs *Output measures* are the results or products from accomplishing an environmental activity or effort that are related to an environmental goal or objective and will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specific date. The anticipated outputs of SAI Grant Program projects may include: 1) educational and outreach materials for growers; 2) conferences, seminars, and on-site field training; 3) partnerships established between federal and non-federal programs to provide reduced risk/IPM programs for crop producers; and 4) reports on project progress and final results.

Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan/GPRA Architecture. These assistance agreements will support EPA Strategic Plan Subobjective 4.1.5.

For additional information about how the SAI FQPA Grant Program aligns with EPA's Strategic Plan consult EPA's Office of Prevention Pesticides and Toxic Substances FY 2008 National Program Manager's Guidance at http://www.epa.gov/cfo/npmguidance/oppts/2008/final_npmguidance.pdf. Scroll down to page 29 in the document.

For more information on EPA's Strategic Plan Goal 4 go to http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/2006/goal_4.pdf.

All proposed SAI projects will demonstrate how they will result in ensuring the public health and socio-economic benefits of pesticide availability and use are achieved. Projects must demonstrate and facilitate the adoption of farm management decisions and practices that provide growers with a "reasonable transition" away from the highest risk pesticides, as mandated by FQPA. Average percent change in the utilization of reduced risk pest management practices over time per grantee will be determined by regular measurement based on the SAI Transition Gradient.

Additional ideas on setting performance measures can be found in the SAI Toolbox at http://www.afresearch.org/sai/public/performance_measures.php

II. Award Information

A. Amount of Funding Available

For this competition, the Program anticipates funding one proposal for up to \$100,000. Costs incurred prior to the grant award will not be reimbursed.

B. Funding Type

The funding for selected projects is in the form of a grant awarded under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Section 20, and the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), Section 10, as amended by Public Law 106-74.

C. Total Number of Awards

EPA anticipates funding one grant award. Funding for this project is not guaranteed and is subject to the availability of funds and the evaluation of proposals based on the criteria in this announcement.

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and that maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

The EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Agency policy, if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than 4 (four) months after the original selection decisions.

Award of funding through this year's competition is not a guarantee of future funding.

EPA Region 2 reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards.

D. Start Date/Project Duration

The suggested start date for the project is March 1, 2008. Proposed project periods may be up to two (2) years. Funding and project periods can extend for no more than two (2) years.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Assistance under this program is generally available to States, territories, Indian Tribes, and possessions of the United States. Assistance is also available to public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, and other public or private nonprofit institutions. Nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply. For profit organizations are not eligible for funding. Ineligible groups are encouraged to collaborate with an eligible organization to submit proposals.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

There are no cost-share requirements for these projects nor are matching funds required.

C. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for consideration under this announcement, applicants must meet all of the following threshold criteria. Failure to meet all of the following criteria will result in the automatic disqualification of the proposal for funding consideration. Applicants will be notified within 15 calendar days of ineligibility determination.

1. Program Requirements.

- Applicant must be an eligible applicant in accordance with Section III. A.
- Implementation of all projects must occur within one or more of the four entities of EPA Region 2 – New York, New Jersey, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and/or the Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- All proposed project activities and costs must be eligible under either of the following EPA grant authorities:
 - Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Section 20, as amended by Public Law 106-74, and, Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), Section 10, as amended by Public Law 106-74. In addition, applicants should refer to the applicable cost principles for guidance on allowability, allocability and reasonableness of costs (see Section IV E, Funding Restrictions)
- Proposals must be received by the EPA Region 2 office or through www.grants.gov on or before the solicitation closing date as noted in Section IV. C. of this announcement. Proposal submissions must strictly

adhere to this deadline and electronic submittals must be free of electronic viruses, Trojan horses or other harmful programs. For additional information, please refer to Section IV, Application & Submission Information.

- Proposals must address one or more of the goals of the Strategic Agricultural Initiative program listed above in Section I.B. of this announcement. Since the FQPA/SAI grant program is intended to help implement the FQPA, funding cannot be used for basic research. However, proposed projects may include a component for applied on-farm research.
- Proposals must utilize the following measure in addition to any other declared environmental measures: Current level of pest management and the projected level of pest management at the end of the project based on the “IPM Transition Gradient” located at http://www.aftresearch.org/sai/public/pdf/Transition_Matrix.pdf.
- Proposals must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV. However, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV. with respect to the proposal and/or parts of the proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Blank application forms can be obtained at the following Internet address:

<http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm>

Hard paper copies of application forms can be obtained at the following address:

Richard Koustas
US EPA Region 2
2890 Woodbridge Ave., MS-500
Edison, NJ, 08837-3679
732-321-6691
By Email: koustas.richard@epa.gov

Applicants applying through Grants.gov will find the entire application package by following the instructions listed in Section IV.D.2 of this announcement.

B. Content and Format of Proposal Submission

Regardless of the mode of submission, all proposals must adhere to the content and format specifications as laid out in this section.

Proposals must be typewritten and should have a page size of 8½ x 11 inches, be easily readable with a conventional font size and style, double spaced, and be no more than fifteen (15) pages in length (a page is one side of a piece of paper). Please print double-sided if possible. All pages should be numbered in order starting with the cover page for ease of reading.

All proposals should include the sections and section titles listed below. For example, the proposal should include a section titled “Executive Summary” followed by the sections “Proposal Narrative,” “Project Title,” “Environmental Issue,” and so on. The page numbers shown in parentheses for each section listed below are suggested lengths only; applicants may adjust their project description within the 15-page limit to best fit their needs.

In addition to what is described below, applicants must ensure that they submit information in their proposal that addresses and corresponds to the criteria in Section V.A.

1. Cover Page (1 page)

Provide the following information with your letterhead:

Docket ID number: EPA-R
Project title:
Project Coordinator:
Organization name and address:
Telephone number:
Fax number:
Email address:
Project duration (including starting date and ending date):
First year funding request:
Second year funding request, if applicable:
Total funding request:
EPA funding requested:

Please indicate if this proposal is a continuation of a previously EPA funded project. Yes ____ No ____

If yes, please provide the following:

EPA assistance number:
Budget period of project:

2. Executive Summary (1 page)

The Executive Summary is a stand-alone document, not to exceed one (1) page, containing the specifics of what is proposed and what you expect to accomplish regarding measuring or movement toward achieving project goals. This summary should identify the **measurable environmental results** you expect including potential human health and ecological benefits. (See Section I.D. for more information about environmental results.)

3. Proposal Narrative (10 pages)

The proposal narrative should specifically address each of the evaluation criteria disclosed in Section V.A (Selection Criteria). The proposal narrative includes Parts 5.a. through 5.g.

- a) **Project Title:** self-explanatory.
- b) **Environmental Issues:** Concisely describe the environmental issue(s) of concern and the importance of that issue.
- c) **Literature Review/Background:** Briefly describe relevant information currently available. This should include information on current projects that are relevant to or provide the basis for either the experimental design or the validation of an innovative or new approach to pest management and improving water quality. Include a list of key literature citations.
- d) **Objectives:** Include a numbered list (1, 2, etc.) of concisely written project objectives. In most cases, each objective can be stated in a single sentence. Link each stated project objective to EPA Strategic Plan Sub-objective 4.1.5. (See Section I.D.3. of this announcement.) All grant-funded activities are required to be linked to EPA's Strategic Plan.

A minimum of one objective must also address the goals of the FQPA SAI, which can be found in Section I.B.

- e) **Environmental Results:** Provide a work plan for tracking and measuring your progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of the proposed project (see Section I.D., Environmental Results). Within the plan, include the following components:
 - List the activities required to accomplish the work plan objectives
 - Describe the project activities in detail and include an outreach/public participation strategy
 - Describe how you will achieve clearly defined, measurable results.
 - Describe what baseline will be used
 - Describe the anticipated contribution towards improvement to human health, the ecosystem, or quality of life
 - Where appropriate, explicitly state the target pesticide(s), pest(s), and/or crop(s).

All proposals must include the following element for reporting of project measures:

- Current level of pest management and the projected level of pest management at the end of the project based on the "IPM Transition Gradient" located at http://www.aftresearch.org/sai/public/pdf/Transition_Matrix.pdf.

Applicants are encouraged to also include the following elements for reporting of project measures:

- Percent reduction or pound per acre reduction expected in the use of highly toxic active ingredients and/or pesticide products.
- Reductions in number of detections of fruits and/or vegetables with tolerance violations, particularly organophosphates.
- Comparison of the levels of residues on fruit and/or vegetables from conventional vs. reduced-risk pesticide practices.
- Acres under management that include pesticide risk reduction practices. Acres treated with biopesticides or reduced risk pesticides.
- Reduction of mortality to non-target aquatic and terrestrial organisms caused by pesticides.
- Populations of beneficial organisms in fields and adjacent habitat.

Additional ideas on setting performance measures can be found in the SAI Toolbox at http://www.aftresearch.org/sai/public/performance_measures.php

f) **Timetable for Accomplishments:** Include a timetable that identifies what tasks/ steps, results, and final products will be accomplished under each of the objectives during the project and when completion of each is anticipated. Describe significant steps and milestones.

g) **Programmatic Capability:** Applicants should submit information addressing the items below.

- (1) Briefly describe your organization's experience related to the area of interest, and the organization's infrastructure as it relates to its ability to implement the proposed project.
- (2) Include a brief description of staffing and funding resources available to implement the proposed project including the number of staff and their qualifications (no resumes are required), or your ability to hire or obtain the requisite experience.
- (3) Provide a brief description of your past performance in documenting and/or reporting on your progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and outputs, (e.g., results) under federal and/or non-federal funded agreements similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed agreement performed within the last 3 years; and if such progress was not made whether the documentation and/or reports satisfactorily explained why not. For each such agreement, applicants should submit information showing that progress/technical reports or other documentation generated under the agreement adequately demonstrated progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of the agreement, and if such progress was not being achieved then satisfactorily explained why not. Applicants should identify the agreements and a point of contact for each such agreement.
- (4) Provide a brief description of your past performance in successfully completing agreements, meeting reporting requirements, and submitting acceptable final technical reports under federal and/or non-federal

funded agreements similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed agreement performed within the last 3 years. Applicants should identify the agreements and a point of contact for each such agreement. When evaluating an applicant for programmatic capability, EPA will consider information provided by applicants and may consider information from other sources including Agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant).

4. Budget Narrative (1 page)

Please submit a detailed budget with narrative, explaining the need for funding under each of the appropriate budget categories. List the anticipated amount of funding and associated staff needed to achieve the project objectives. Include the requested federal and any non-federal cost share in these estimates. Link each task or activity from the project work plan to the associated resources that are needed to accomplish the activity. Under travel, include the travel location(s), estimated number of trips, estimated total mileage, and number of nights lodging required throughout the entire project period. For more information, see <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/recipient/tips.htm>.

5. DUNS Number

Applicants are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number with the full application for federal grants or cooperative agreements. Individuals are exempt from this requirement. Organizations can receive a DUNS number in one day, at no cost, by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711.

6. Forms

Applicants are required to submit the following forms with the proposal package. These forms will not count against the page limit.

Standard Form SF 424 – Application For Federal Assistance

Include the organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424. Clearly state the total funding amount requested for the entire project period in Block 15.

Standard Form SF 424A – Budget Information

Use budget amounts for the entire project in Sections A, B, C and D including both federal and any non-federal match.

Standard Form SF 424B – Assurances Non-Construction Programs Certification

Certification Regarding Lobbying

Key Contacts List

Key Contacts List – Additional (if needed)

Blank forms can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm>.

7. Letters of Support

Letters of support are not required but may be included within the proposal submission. Letters of support will not count against the page limit. Any submitted support letters should specifically indicate how the supporting organization would assist the project.

C. Pre-Application Assistance

In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy of January 11, 2005 (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet or discuss with individual applicants their draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications/proposals.

D. Submission Methods, Dates and Times

Applicants may apply under this announcement in one of two ways. If you wish to apply via hard copy submission, please follow the instructions under “Hard Copy Submission” below. If you wish to apply via Grants.gov submission, please follow the instructions under “Grants.gov Submission” below. **Please use only one method.** All proposals must be received by EPA on or before the due date and time. For any questions concerning submission, please contact Richard Koustas, 732-321-6691 or at koustas.richard@epa.gov.

1. Grants.gov Submission

Applicants who wish to submit their materials electronically through the Grants.gov web site may do so. Grants.gov allows an applicant to download a proposal or application package template and complete the package offline based on agency instructions. After an applicant completes the required proposal or application package, it can submit the package electronically to Grants.gov, which transmits the package to the funding agency. Pictures and/or maps will need to be scanned so that they can be submitted electronically as part of the application package.

If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, the electronic submission of your proposal package must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Get Registered” on the left side of the page. Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete. If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To begin the application process for this grant program, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Apply for Grants” tab on the left of the page. Then click on “Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions” to download the PureEdge viewer and obtain the application package and instructions for applying under this announcement using Grants.gov (https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html). You may retrieve the application package and instructions by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-R2-DECA-PTSB-07-01, or the CFDA number 66.716, in the space provided. Then complete and submit the application package as indicated.

You may also be able to access the application package by clicking on the button “How To Apply” at the top right of the synopsis page for this announcement on <http://www.grants.gov> (to find the synopsis page, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Find Grant Opportunities” button on the left side of the page and then go to Search Opportunities and use the Browse by Agency feature to find EPA opportunities).

Application/proposal materials submitted through Grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically. Proposals must be completed, submitted and time/date stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than **5:00 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time on November 9, 2007**. Complete instructions on applying through Grants.gov are provided in Appendix B of this announcement.

2. Submission to Regional Contact By Hard Copy and Compact Disc (CD)

EPA will consider all hard copy proposals that are received at the EPA Region 2, Edison, NJ office from the U.S. Postal Service, hand-delivered, courier, or express delivery service. Only one form of delivery listed above is required to meet the deadline. Proposals must be **received** in the EPA Region 2 office no later than **5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, November 9, 2007**, regardless of the hard copy delivery method. EPA will not accept faxed or email submissions. Proposals received after the due date will not be considered for funding.

Two hard copies of the complete proposal package described in Section IV.B below, and an electronic version on a CD, are required. The CD may be in Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf) or Microsoft Word (.doc). Letters of support, pictures and/or maps will need to be scanned so that they can be submitted electronically as part of the CD. Pictures and/or maps may be included as separate files using .jpg or .tif format.

Hard Copy Submission address:

Richard Koustas
US EPA Region 2
2890 Woodbridge Ave., MS-500
Edison, NJ, 08837-3679

E. Intergovernmental Review

If selected for award, applicants must comply with the Intergovernmental Review Process and/or consultation provisions of Section 204, Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act, if applicable, which are contained in 40 CFR Part 29. This Program is eligible for coverage under E.O. 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs”. Applicants should consult the office or official designated as the single point of contact in his or her state for more information on the process the state requires to be followed in applying for assistance if the state has selected the program for review. Further information regarding this requirement will be provided if your proposal is selected for funding.

F. Confidential Business Information (CBI)

In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicant may claim all or a portion of their application/proposal as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications/proposals or portions of applications/proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c) (2) prior to disclosure.

G. Funding Restrictions

EPA grant funds may only be used for the purposes set forth in the grant agreement, and must be consistent with the statutory authorities for the award. Grant funds may not be used for matching funds for other federal grants, lobbying, or intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. In addition, federal funds may not be used to sue the federal government or any other government entity. All costs identified in the budget must conform to applicable Federal Cost Principles contained in OMB Circular A-87 “Cost Principles for State, Local, and Tribal Governments”; A-122 “Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations”; and A-21 “Cost Principles for Educational Institutions.” Ineligible costs will be reduced from the final grant award. Cost(s) incurred prior to award by the applicant will not be allowed.

Construction projects, except for the construction required to carry out a demonstration project, and acquisition of land are not eligible for funding under this program.

New or on-going programs to implement environmental controls are not eligible for funding under this program. Implementation includes routine or regularly conducted projects with little or no outreach to share knowledge, and the program has basic knowledge of proposed projects and outcomes. Programs can include, but are not limited to, existing or planned programs or actions, which reflect federal, state, or local regulation requirements.

Management Fees: When formulating budgets for proposals/applications, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicants cognizant audit agency, or at the rate provided for by the terms of the agreement negotiated with EPA. The term "management fees or similar charges" refers to expenses added to the direct costs in order to accumulate and reserve funds for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable under EPA assistance agreements. Management fees or similar charges may not be used to improve or expand the project funded under this agreement, except to the extent authorized as a direct cost of carrying out the scope of work.

Partnerships: EPA awards funds to one eligible applicant as the “recipient” even if other eligible applicants are named as “partners” or “co-applicants” or members of a “coalition” or “consortium”. The recipient is accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of funds. Funding may be used to provide subgrants or subawards of financial assistance to fund partnerships provided the recipient complies with applicable requirements for subawards or subgrants including those contained in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. Successful applicants must compete contracts for services and products and conduct cost and price analyses to the extent required by the procurement provisions of these regulations. The

regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not required to identify contractors or consultants in their proposal. Moreover, the fact that a successful applicant has named a specific contractor or consultant in the proposal EPA approves does not relieve it of its obligations to comply with competitive procurement requirements. Please note that applicants may not award sole source contracts to consulting, engineering or other firms assisting applicants with the proposal solely based on the firm's role in preparing the proposal.

Successful applicants cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products from for-profit organizations to carry out its assistance agreement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the subawardee or subgrantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and subrecipient assistance under Subpart B Section .210 of OMB Circular A-133, and the definitions of “subaward” at 40 CFR 30.2(ff) or “subgrant” at 40 CFR 31.3, as applicable. EPA will not be a party to these transactions.

V. Application Review Information

A. Selection Criteria

Only those proposals that meet the threshold criteria listed in Section III of this announcement will be evaluated based on the criteria below.

<p>1. Focus on sustainable agriculture, and a whole systems approach, and provides an innovated approach for minor/specialty crops (10 points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (5 points) The project is based on a “whole systems” approach to pest management and integrates pest, soil, crop, and water management practices for minor/specialty crops. • (5 points) The project is progressive and forward thinking, and undertakes innovative or novel approaches. The project provides innovative efforts that enable growers to decrease reliance on agricultural chemicals while maintaining economical outcomes, by developing, demonstrating and/or applying reduced-risk alternatives and ecologically-based integrated approaches to pest management. Will the project assess or suggest a new means of measuring progress in reducing risk/use of pesticides in the United States?
<p>2. Importance of project in relation to FQPA (10 points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (5 points) The project addresses critical pest management issues relative to the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) and is consistent with the goals of the FQPA Strategic Agricultural Initiative. (See Section I.B. for goals.) • (5 points) The project focuses on actual results, getting information and agricultural practices into the hands of growers who actually use them to shift away from FQPA-targeted pesticides to other methods of pest management.

<p>3. Commodity and Region-wide significance and degree of transferability to other areas (6 points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (2 points) The proposal includes a discussion of critical pest management issues, explaining the importance of the project and the commodity. • (2 points) The proposal addresses how the agricultural practice and reduced-risk tools could be adapted to other locations with similar cropping systems. • (2 points) The proposal addresses the sociological or economic forces that support adoption, or those impediments that limit adoption.
<p>4. Involvement of on-farm demonstration with active roles for multiple grower participation (10 points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (10 points) The project relies on partnerships and the participation of growers as part of the project activities. Cooperation with scientists, extension officers, pest control advisors, crop consultants other non-profit organizations, and other partners is encouraged. Letters of support from collaborators, indicating their contributions to the project, should be provided for this factor. Should build upon existing efforts.
<p>5. Clearly stated pest management issue, goals/objectives, timeline of activities, project strategy, narrative budget, and description of roles and responsibilities of project staff (19 points)</p>	<p>The proposal clearly describes and demonstrates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (1 points) An identified pest management issue and the relevance of that issue to growers' adoption of reduced risk alternatives and/or sustainable integrated pest or crop management methods. • (3 points) Summary of key goals, objectives, and final products. • (3 points) Schedule or timeline of activities for the project. • (5 points) Budget and estimated funding amounts for each proposal component/task that corresponds to the SF424A Grant Application form budget categories. Total costs must include both federal and any proposed matching (non-federal) components/tasks. Identify any proposed cost share or match in the budget. • (2 points) Description of roles and responsibilities of the applicant and major partners in carrying out the project commitments. • (5 points) The proposal includes a well-conceived strategy to achieve the project goals and objectives and a reasonable schedule for the execution of the tasks associated with each goal. The applicant should identify the method that will be used to measure and document the project's results quantitatively and/or qualitatively.

<p>6. Use of outreach to enhance grower adoption (13 points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (10 points) The project uses outreach and other communications that will lead to effective learning and adoption of new practices • (3 points) The proposal includes a description of how long term, sustainable adoption will be measured.
<p>7. Programmatic capability (Technical Experience and Past Performance) (10 points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (2 points) Applicant has past performance in successfully completing federally and/or non-federally funded projects similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last three (3) years. • (2 points) Applicant has history of meeting reporting requirements on prior or current assistance agreements with federal and/or non-federal organizations performed within the last three (3) years and submitting acceptable final technical reports under those agreements. • (2 points) Applicant has past performance in documenting and/or reporting on the progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and outputs (e.g., results) under federal and/or non-federal agreements similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last three (3) years. (If such progress was not made, document why not.) <p>Note: Applicants with no relevant or available past performance reporting history will receive a neutral score for this factor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (2 points) Applicant has organizational experience and a management plan to ensure successful completion of the project. • (2 points) Applicant has the staff expertise, qualifications, knowledge, and resources (or the ability to obtain them) to successfully achieve the goals of the project.

<p>8. Expected ability to produce measurable environmental results (22 points)</p>	<p>Projects will be evaluated on their expected ability to achieve predicted environmental results, expected outcomes, project goals, and produce on-the-ground, quantifiable environmental change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (7 points) The proposal includes a minimum of one additional performance measure that can be tracked throughout the project. Examples include, but are not limited to the following: 1) Reductions in number of detections of fruits and/or vegetables with tolerance violations, particularly organophosphates. 2) Comparison of the levels of residues on fruit and/or vegetables from conventional vs. reduced-risk pesticide practices. 3) Acres under management that include pesticide risk reduction practices. Acres treated with biopesticides or reduced risk pesticides. 4) Reduction of mortality to non-target aquatic and terrestrial organisms caused by pesticides. 5) Populations of beneficial organisms in fields and adjacent habitat. 6) Percent reduction or pound per acre reduction expected in the use of conventional pesticides. <p>Other examples of performance measures are listed in the Strategic Agriculture Initiative Toolbox located at http://www.aftresearch.org/sai/public/performance_measures.p hp. If additional performance measures (other than those listed in the SAI Toolbox) are used, they must be clearly described and submitted as part of the proposal. If your project is selected for funding, measures included in your proposal may be subject to negotiation. Be sure to describe the method you will use to attain data to support the measures indicated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (8 points) The proposal describes the expected outcomes of the project, including: (i) how the project will result in ensuring the public health and socio-economic benefits of pesticide availability and use are achieved (EPA Strategic Plan Sub-objective 4.1.5); (ii) the expected percent reduction or pound per acre reduction in the use of highly toxic pesticides; and (iii) the number of acres likely to be impacted by the project. • (7 points) The proposal includes a clear and effective plan for tracking and measuring progress in achieving expected outputs and outcomes.
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Note: Strategic Agricultural Initiative grants are not intended to support basic research; however, proposals may include a *component for applied on-farm research*, as long as they also have *demonstration, education and/or outreach activities*. Proposals that maximize the use of resources for “on-the-ground” activities will be viewed more favorably than those proposals with high administrative costs.

B. Review and Selection Process

All proposals will be screened by EPA staff against the threshold eligibility purposes in Section III.C.

A selected panel of EPA reviewers will review the eligible proposals based on the evaluation criteria listed above (see Section V.A.). Both the quality and quantity of the proposals will play a significant role in the selection of grants for funding. In evaluating applicants for programmatic capability purposes, EPA will consider information provided by the applicant in their application/proposal as well as information from other sources, including agency files.

- Based upon the review of proposals against the criteria in Section V.A., the review panel will develop a list of the most highly rated proposals. Funding recommendations will then be made to the EPA Region 2 Division of Enforcement and Compliance Assistance manager, who will make final funding decisions based on the recommendations of the review team.

The selected Applicant will be notified of recommendation for funding by e-mail after final decisions have been made. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance.

C. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Region 2 anticipates announcing the successful proposal within 60 days after the closing date of this announcement. Project award is anticipated 90 days after the notification of the successful applicant.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

The successful applicant will be invited to submit a complete grant application package prior to award (see 40 CFR 30.12 and 31.10) that will be due approximately four weeks after notification.

EPA reserves the right to negotiate and/or adjust the final grant amount and work plan content prior to award, as appropriate and consistent with Agency policy, including the Assistance Agreement Competition Policy, EPA Order 5700.5A1.

Upon receipt of a complete application, work plan, and budget, the recommendations for funding of the award will be made to the Regional Administrator. When all funding decisions are complete, a grant award notification will be issued to the recipients. This is the conclusion of the competitive award process and begins the grant performance period.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Non-Profit Applicants

Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding under this announcement are subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Section 8b, 8c and 9d of EPA Order 5700.8 - Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards (http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf). In addition, non-profit applicants that qualify for funding may, depending on the size of the award, be required to fill out

and submit to the Grants Management Office the Administrative Capabilities Form with supporting documents contained in Appendix A of EPA Order 5700.8.

Quality Assurance

If environmental activities include direct measurements or data generation, environmental modeling, or compilation of data from literature or electronic media as part of the funding agreement, a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and submission date to EPA for approval will be required unless the organization can show a previously EPA approved Quality Management Plan. No federal funds may be expended or requested for reimbursement for data collection or environmental sampling activities prior to submittal and approval of the Quality Assurance Project Plan to/by the EPA Project Officer.

Copyrights

EPA reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for federal government purposes in accordance with 40 CFR 31.34: (a) The copyright in any work developed under a grant, subgrant, or contract under a grant or subgrant; and (b) Any rights of copyright to which a grantee, subgrantee or a contractor purchases ownership with grant support.

Conferences and Workshops

If a conference or workshop is an element of the project, the applicant will also be required to answer the following questions:

- Who is initiating the conference/workshop/meeting?
- How will it be advertised?
- Whose logo will be on the agenda and materials?
- What is the percentage of participants, i.e. federal, state, local or public?
- Will the grant recipient prepare the proceedings and disseminate the information back to the targeted community?
- Will program income be generated from this event?

Disputes Process

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629-3630 (January 26, 2005), which can be found at www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/resolution.htm. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting Chester Stovall at (913) 551-7549.

C. Reporting

Progress Reports: The successful applicant will be required to submit biannual progress reports throughout the duration of the project. Progress reports are due 60 days after each midyear and year of the project period. Reports should include a description of project activities including accomplishments, successes and lessons learned along with any problems and/or delays, and a summary of funds expended. Environmental outcomes should be indicated in relation to the approved schedule and milestones. Reports should be submitted electronically if possible.

Final Reports: will be required at the completion of the project, as stated in

40CFR§31.40 and 40CFR§30.51. The report will include any agreed-upon work-product(s) resulting from the project, and copies of materials generated in connection with project activities (e.g., workshop announcements, workshop sign in sheets, newspaper/newsletter announcements, articles or releases, press packets, pamphlets, etc.). Any additional requirements will be stated in the Special Conditions of the Award document. This report is due 90 days following the end of the project period.

Financial Status Reports (FSRs): are required on an annual basis, as stated in 40CFR§30.52 and 40CFR§31.41, as applicable. A Final FSR is required at the completion of the project.

VII. Agency Contacts

Richard Koustas
EPA Region 2
Pesticides Team
2890 Woodbridge Ave., MS-500
Edison, NJ, 08837-3679
Telephone: (732) 321-6691
Fax: (732) 732-6771
koustas.richard@epa.gov

APPENDIX A – CHECKLIST TOOL

Submission Requirements: Hard Copy or Grants.gov

Hard Copy Submittal

If the hard copy submittal method is used, one original hard copy of the proposal must be received by EPA by U.S. Postal Service, hand delivery, courier, or express delivery service no later than **5:00 P.M. EDT on November 9, 2007.**

Submit hard copy proposal to:

Richard Koustas
EPA Region 2
Pesticides Team
2890 Woodbridge Ave., MS-500
Edison, NJ, 08837-3679
Telephone: (732) 321-6691
Fax: (732) 321-6771
koustas.richard@epa.gov

Grants.gov Submittal

If the Grants.gov submittal method is used, the proposal must be submitted no later than **5:00 P.M. EDT on November 9, 2007.**

Forms and Proposal Checklist

Note: All forms and proposal components listed below are required, regardless of method of submission.

Forms

- Standard Form SF 424 – Application For Federal Assistance**
- Standard Form SF 424A – Budget Information**
- Standard Form SF 424B – Assurances Non-Construction Programs Certification**
- Certification Regarding Lobbying**
- Key Contacts List**
- Key Contacts List – Additional (if needed)**

Proposal

- Cover Page (1 page)**

Provide the following information with your letterhead:

Docket ID number: **EPA-R2-DECA-PTSB-07-01**

Project title:

Project Coordinator:

Organization name and address:

Telephone number:

Fax number:

Email address:
Project duration (including starting date and ending date):
First year funding request:
Second year funding request, if applicable:
Total funding request:
EPA funding requested:

Please indicate if this proposal is a continuation of a previously EPA funded project. Yes ____ No ____

If yes, please provide the following:

EPA assistance number:

Budget period of project:

Executive Summary (1 page)

Proposal Narrative (10 pages)

Including the following sections:

- Project Title
- Environmental Issues
- Literature Review/Background
- Objectives
- Environmental Results
- Timetable for Accomplishments
- Programmatic Capability

Budget Narrative (2 pages)

DUNS Number

Letters of Support (as applicable)

APPENDIX B – GRANTS.GOV INSTRUCTIONS

How to submit your proposal through Grants.gov:

At <http://www.grants.gov>, you will find step-by-step instructions which will help you to apply under this announcement. Proposals submitted through grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically.

If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, the electronic submission of your proposal must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Get Registered” on the left side of the page. *Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete.* If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To begin the application process for this announcement, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Apply for Grants” tab at the left side of the page. Then click on “Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions” to download the PureEdge viewer and obtain the application package. You may retrieve the application package and instructions by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, **EPA-R2-DECA-PTSB-07-01**, in the space provided. Then complete and submit the application package as indicated. You may also be able to access the application package by clicking on the button “How To Apply” at the top right of the synopsis page for this announcement on <http://www.grants.gov> (to find the synopsis page, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Find Grant Opportunities” button on the left side of the page and then go to “Search Opportunities” and use the “Browse by Agency” feature to find EPA opportunities).

Application Submission Deadline

Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete application electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) no later than **5:00 P.M. EDT on November 9, 2007**.

Application Materials

Applicants are required to submit six documents to apply electronically through Grants.gov. All six documents should appear in the “Mandatory Documents” box on the Grants.gov Grant Application Package page.

- 1. Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance**

Complete the form. There are no attachments.

Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.

- 2. SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs**

Complete the form. There are no attachments.

The total amount of federal funding requested for the two-year project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A. If indirect costs are included, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated

on line 22. If indirect costs are requested, a copy of the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement must be submitted as part of the application package. (See instructions for document 10 below.)

3. **SF-424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs**
Complete the form. There are no attachments.
4. **Grants.gov Lobbying Form – Certification Regarding Lobbying**
Complete the form. There are no attachments.
5. **EPA Form 5700-54, Key Contacts Form**
Complete the form. There are no attachments.
6. **Proposal Narrative**
Prepare as described in Section IV.B. of the announcement.

For the Proposal Narrative portion, you will need to attach electronic files. Prepare your narrative as described in Section IV.C of the announcement and save the document to your computer as an MS Word, PDF or WordPerfect file. When you are ready to attach your proposal narrative to the application package, click on “Project Narrative Attachment Form,” and open the form. Click “Add Mandatory Project Narrative File,” and then attach your proposal narrative (previously saved to your computer) using the browse window that appears. You may then click “View Mandatory Project Narrative File” to view it. Enter a brief descriptive title of your project in the space beside “Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename,” the filename should be no more than 40 characters long. If there are other attachments that you would like to submit to accompany your proposal, you may click “add Optional Project Narrative File” and proceed as before. When you have finished attaching the necessary documents, click “Close Form.” When you return to the “Grant Application Package” page, select the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” and click “Move Form to Submission List.” The form should now appear in the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

For the required forms (SF 424, SF 424A, SF 424B, Grants.gov Lobbying form, and EPA Form 5700-54), click on the appropriate form and then click “Open Form” below the box. The fields that must be completed will be highlighted in yellow. Optional fields and completed fields will be displayed in white. If you enter an invalid response or incomplete information in a field, you will receive an error message. When you have finished filling out each form, click “Save.” When you return to the electronic Grant Application Package page, click on the form you just completed, and then click on the box that says, “Move Form to Submission List.” This action moves the document over to the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

Once you have finished filling out all of the forms/attachments and they appear in one of the “Completed Documents for Submission” boxes, click the “Save” button that appears at the top of the Web page. It is suggested that you save the document a second time, using a different name, since this will make it easier to submit an amended package later if necessary.

Please use the following format when saving your file: “Applicant Name – Region # – FY08 – Environmental Quality – 1st Submission” or “Applicant Name – Region # – FY08 Environmental Quality – back-up Submission.” If it becomes necessary to submit an amended package at a later date, then the name of the 2nd submission should be changed to “Applicant Name – Region # – FY08

Environmental Quality – 2nd Submission.” Once your application package has been completed and saved, send it to your AOR for submission to U.S. EPA through Grants.gov. Please advise your AOR to close all other software programs before attempting to submit the application package through Grants.gov.

In the “Application Filing Name” box, your AOR should enter your organization’s name (abbreviated where possible), the appropriate region, the fiscal year (*e.g.*, FY08), and the grant category (*e.g.*, Environmental Quality). The filing name should not exceed 40 characters. From the “Grant Application Package” page, your AOR may submit the application package by clicking the “Submit” button that appears at the top of the page. The AOR will then be asked to verify the agency and funding opportunity number for which the application package is being submitted. If problems are encountered during the submission process, the AOR should reboot his/her computer before trying to submit the application package again. [It may be necessary to turn off the computer (not just restart it) before attempting to submit the package again.] If the AOR continues to experience submission problems, he/she may contact Grants.gov for assistance by phone at 1-800-518-4726 or email at <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp>, and at the same time should notify **Richard Koustas**. If you have any technical difficulties at any time during this process, please refer to <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp>