

Fact Sheet

US Department of Agriculture
Washington, DC
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U.S. – India Knowledge Initiative on Agricultural Education, Teaching, Research, Service and Commercial Linkages

More than 50 years ago, the United States and India signed agreements to improve agricultural education and research in India. We also launched extension/outreach services aimed at providing advice to Indian farmers on new agricultural technologies. A key result of these initiatives was the establishment of five state agricultural universities in India with considerable advisory support from colleagues at American Land-Grant universities. This rich tradition of collaboration in knowledge exchange helped to launch India's Green Revolution, which itself led to the country's subsequent emergence from food insecurity. At the same time, through cooperation, American campuses were extensively enriched with international insights and networks.

Recent years have seen a host of changes. Our relationships have matured such that we now assume more co-equal partnerships that help us meet mutually important goals – and perhaps even jointly assist others in need. The private sector and foundations also play an increasingly active role. Agriculture has become global in its reach, much more complex in its trades and exchanges, more technologically grounded, and ever more challenged with balancing sustainability, productivity and social responsiveness.

The United States – India Knowledge Initiative on Agricultural Education, Teaching, Research, Service and Commercial Linkages announced today will provide the momentum needed to re-energize our longstanding tradition of knowledge exchange. Through it, we will draw upon what we have learned to find new, creative and realistic ways to revitalize our partnership such that agricultural programs at our colleges and universities are better able to respond to the current and future needs of our people, and to opportunities in today's vibrant private business environment.

The Knowledge Initiative will develop a plan for our governments by November 2005 that identifies priority areas for partnerships in teaching, research and service as follows. The plan will describe steps needed to initiate and develop those partnerships, and it will consider resource implications.

- Teaching – The Knowledge Initiative will consider new and existing mechanisms to strengthen curricular design, course content and delivery, and degree attainment in both countries so as to internationalize the student experience. It will also look for ways to

enhance the structure and sustainability of agricultural programs at universities.

- Research – The Initiative will examine and prioritize key collaborative research approaches, topic areas and impact assessments. Possible areas of focus include improved bioproducts; more sustainable use of water and other resources; strengthened systems of pest management; and better understanding of economically viable and environmentally sustainable production systems.
- Service - The Initiative will identify effective, innovative and collaborative approaches that link research results to those who use them such as producers, processors, and marketers of farm goods. Public and private advisory services will be considered.
- Commercial Linkages – The Initiative will look for ways to include private sector suppliers and marketers as participants and funding partners.