

Request for 2009 Proposals

ISU On-farm Research and Demonstration Grant Program

I. What is the ISU On-farm Research and Demonstration Grant Program?

The ISU On-farm Research and Demonstration Grant Program is a program of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences in partnership with Practical Farmers of Iowa (PFI). The goals of the program are to address important challenges facing Iowa agriculture through dynamic partnerships between farmers and researchers and to increase the use of *on-farm research* as a viable and efficient agriculture research methodology within the College and Extension statewide.

II. Where is the funding coming from?

Primary funding is from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences with additional support from the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, the Extension Sustainable Agriculture Program, the Iowa Pork Industry Center, the Iowa Beef Center, Extension Value-Added Program, and Practical Farmers of Iowa.

III. What is On-Farm Research?

On Farm Research is field research undertaken on a working farm, where the *farmer actively participates* in the research question, design, implementation, data collection, interpretation and sharing of the research. In some cases the research is driven by a particular farmer's needs, observations and questions, and in some cases by questions originating with the researcher or Extension specialist.

IV. What is the focus of this program?

The focus of this particular program is on issues of *conservation and sustainability* in Iowa agriculture. Successful proposals may address but need not be limited by the following topics:

- Profitability and Productivity
- Crop and livestock integration on the farm
- Tillage and soil fertility enhancement methods
- Insect, disease, and weed management strategies
- Alternative crops
- Quality of life
- Conservation and on-farm bio diversity
- Off-farm input substitution

V. How much funding will be distributed and what are the award amounts?

A total of \$50,000 will be awarded in 2009. Annual, one-time grants up to \$5,000 maximum will be awarded. Awards to several producers proposing to work together may be up to \$7,000 each. Work may be completed over 24 months maximum.

VI. Who is eligible to apply?

All ISU faculty and staff (including Extension staff), and graduate students, on and off- campus are eligible to apply.

Farmers with ideas for proposals or interest in participating in on-farm research are encouraged to contact the Practical Farmers of Iowa on-campus office for help forming connections to

appropriate ISU faculty, staff and graduate students. See contact information below. Farmers can and should also be appropriately compensated for their contribution to the projects.

ISU faculty, staff and graduate students needing help making connections to farmer researcher cooperators are also encouraged to contact the Practical Farmers of Iowa or other farm organizations. The earlier in the planning process these contacts are made, the more likely they are to improve the project proposals.

While non-ISU researchers and staff persons at other agencies, educational institutions and non-profits (including Practical Farmers of Iowa) are not eligible to apply, they may be partners on proposed projects and compensated for their time.

VII. How do I apply and what is the deadline?

To apply, please submit an *electronic* proposal by email to Joe Colletti, Senior Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, at colletti@iastate.edu, no later than Wednesday, December 17, 2008. Proposals should not exceed four pages plus budget. Please answer these questions in your proposal:

1. Problem or Issue

What is the specific problem or issue you want to address and its importance for Iowa agriculture? How may it impact conservation and sustainability?

2. Proposed Research Activity

Describe in detail the proposed research or demonstration activity? What will you do and how will you do it?

3. Time Frame

What is the start date and end date of the project? (Note this is one-time funding that may be used over a 24-month period, if necessary).

4. Personnel and Partners

Name the key personnel and partners. Include the role (and location) of your cooperating farmer or farmers, as well as the role of any other partners.

5. Outputs and Delivery

Tell us what the products or outputs of the project will be and how you will share the results of this work (i.e. research paper, bulletin, newsletter article, field day presentation, workshop presentation, etc).

6. Budget

Provide a budget and budget narrative. (Remember to include compensation for farmer cooperators).

Applicants are encouraged to:

- Address relevant and practical issues facing Iowa farmers.
- Show *active involvement* of both farmer cooperators and non-farmer advisors or scientists.
- Hold a field day and publish results when appropriate, with the help of Practical Farmers of Iowa and ISU Extension. Contact PFI about budgeting these activities into your proposal.

VIII. How will awardees be determined and when will announcements be made?

A seven-person review panel including a minimum of four farmers will review all the applications and make recommendation to the Senior Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture, who will make the final determinations. Decisions will be announced in late January 2009. Participants awarded research grants will be asked to attend a PFI/ISU cooperator meeting in early February.

Questions: About this RFP? Contact Jerry DeWitt, Director, Leopold Center, (515) 294-3711 or jdewitt@iastate.edu.

Questions: About on-farm design and implementation? Need help finding a farmer or researcher to work with? Contact Rick Exner, Practical Farmers of Iowa, at dnexner@iastate.edu or (515) 232-5661ext.108 (after Nov. 1).

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

