

# **USDA Foreign Agricultural Service Scientific Cooperation Exchange Program with the People's Republic of China**

## **2009 Application Guide**

### **OVERVIEW**

The Scientific Cooperation Exchange Program with the People's Republic of China (SCEP) supports international exchanges that promote agricultural development and economic growth, and mitigate animal and plant health issues that impede trade. This unique program offers excellent opportunities for U.S. teams of up to 5 members to initiate linkages with potential long-term collaborators at Chinese institutions throughout the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Under a special USDA Scientific Technological Exchange Agreement with the PRC, the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture specifically tailors two-week visits to China to meet the scientific objectives of each team. U.S. teams are responsible only for their international airfare to and from China.

### **Priorities**

In 2009, the Scientific Cooperation Exchange Program will accept proposals for food safety, animal and plant health, agricultural biotechnology and other emerging technologies, food and non-food product development, and sustainable plant and animal production, and natural resources management. Projects will support economic development and trade capacity-building and expand market opportunities for agricultural, fish, and forest products.

Priority will be given to innovative proposals that address critical agricultural market, environmental, and trade-related concerns of both countries. Trade-related activities include the safe and appropriate use of biotechnology; address the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) issues of food safety and animal and plant health, and development of new agricultural products. Science-based SPS measures help ensure that food is safe for consumers, and prevent the spread of pests or diseases among animals and plants.

In SPS, 'sanitary' refers to human and animal health, including fish and wild fauna; while 'phyto-sanitary' pertains to plant health, including forests and wild flora. Natural resource management proposals might deal with water availability and management, climate change, animal waste management and other environmental impact issues.

### **Background**

USDA signed a cooperative agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture of the People's Republic of China in 1978 to exchange scientific teams and technical information. Since

that agreement, which was incorporated into the umbrella of the U.S.-China Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement in 1979, more than 2,000 American and Chinese scientists have participated in exchanges under the SCEP. SCEP exchanges have helped promote U.S. agricultural priorities, encourage long-term cooperation in agricultural science and technology, create a positive atmosphere for agricultural trade, and enhance overall relations between the United States and People's Republic of China.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

### **Who may apply?**

U.S. scientists affiliated with a college or university, a federal or state agency, or a private, nonprofit organization may apply. Proposals are especially encouraged from scientists early in their career, women scientists, and scientists or institutions representing under-served and under-represented communities, particularly American Indian, Alaska Native, Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Asian American, and African American. U.S. institutions include those in American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

## **TARGET SUBJECT AREAS**

The 2009 cycle of the annual competitive Scientific Cooperation Exchange Program with the People's Republic of China welcomes proposals for joint activities of mutual benefit in food safety, animal and plant health, agricultural and forestry related marketing and trade, and environmentally sustainable agriculture.

### **Food Safety**

- Develop and improve techniques and strategies to promote food safety
- Improve technologies to help assure the safety of food products and justify safety standards and regulations for food production and handling

### **Animal and Plant Health**

- Develop technologies to more quickly and accurately identify and control the spread of animal and plant-borne diseases and pests, particularly those with the potential to spread to humans
- Identify appropriate measures for surveillance, monitoring, control and/or eradication of animal and plant pests and diseases

- Minimize the impact of animal and plant pest and disease outbreaks

### **Agricultural Biotechnology and Emerging Technologies**

- Improve food safety and environmental safety risk management tools for regulation, production, and marketing of biotechnology products
- Build capacities to develop, manage, and regulate agricultural biotechnology
- Assess the impact of biotechnology crops on agricultural productivity and economic growth
- Increase agricultural applications of nanotechnology
- Enhance development of information technologies such as agricultural digital libraries and improve applications for plant and animal health

### **Food Processing and Product Development**

- Develop new products and processing techniques to increase the availability of nutritious foods, such as nutraceuticals, functional foods, traditional medicinal foods, and biofortification
- Develop and improve organic products and high-value, consumer-oriented products

### **Non-Food Product Development**

- Improve and create new products, practices and markets, such as biofuels that use plant residues for ethanol and biodiesel production
- Generate new technologies and tools that support the development, processing, and marketing of specialty and non-food products

### **Sustainable Plant and Animal Management**

- Promote economically and environmentally sustainable crop, livestock, and aquaculture management, including animal waste management
- Promote environmentally sustainable water management practices
- Minimize the use of agricultural chemicals using integrated pest management and new techniques such as biotechnology for biological control agents, mass production of biopesticides, and bioengineered plants  
Develop and improve planting seed, livestock genetics, feeds and forages

### **FUNDING**

The SCEP provides funding in support of USDA's Scientific Technological Exchange Agreement with the People's Republic of China (PRC) for visits of teams in which the receiving country covers all expenses for in-country travel and per diem for visiting teams. Under this agreement, teams with a maximum of 5 scientists are exchanged for up to 15 days per team. Please be aware, however, that U.S. participants are responsible for

their international airfare between the U.S. and China, as are Chinese teams coming to the United States.

- **Exchanges to China.** U.S. participants are responsible for their international airfare to and from China as well as stopovers in Hong Kong and Tokyo. All exchange visits must start in Beijing. No funds will be given to U.S. participants by the SCEP or the PRC. The Chinese Ministry of Agriculture will provide meals, lodging, interpreter and domestic and local transportation for U.S. teams within the People's Republic of China.
- **Exchanges to the U.S.** USDA's SCEP reciprocates by receiving and paying travel and per diem expenses within the United States of visiting Chinese teams. Teams from the PRC are responsible for their international airfare and are selected, approved, and coordinated by the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture. USDA pays for one additional team member to serve as the team's interpreter.

### **APPLICATION DEADLINE**

SCEP applications may be submitted either electronically or as printed copies by mail or hand delivery by Friday, January 30, 2009.

Any changes to the SCEP deadline or guidelines will be accessible on the internet at: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/icd/grants/scep/scep.asp>.

### **Electronic Applications**

A completed electronic application must be submitted to [Khaliaka.Meardry@fas.usda.gov](mailto:Khaliaka.Meardry@fas.usda.gov) by Friday, January 30, 2009.

### **Printed Applications**

A completed SCEP application package with original signatures and four copies must be delivered to the USDA/FAS headquarters in Washington, DC by Friday, January 30, 2009. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit the printed copies of the application through overnight mail or delivery service to ensure timely receipt by the USDA. The address for hand-delivered applications or applications submitted using an express mail or overnight courier service is:

Attention: Khaliaka Meardry  
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service  
Office of Capacity Building and Development  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Room 3224, South Building  
Ag Stop 1031  
Washington, DC 20250-1031

## **APPLICATION PREPARATION**

Each application to the SCEP will require only two forms: a project narrative and a standard form SF 424.

### **1. Project Narrative Attachment Form**

The proposal's project narrative discussed in this section is outlined in detail below.

For electronic applications, three types of documents can be uploaded to an application package: PDF - Portable Document Format, Word, and Text files.

For printed copy applications, proposals should be prepared on standard size, 8-1/2 x 11 inch white paper and printed on one side of the page using 12 point font text.

Proposals for the SCEP may not exceed 10 single-spaced pages. Page numbering starts with the cover page, and includes the proposal text, biodata, and references.

## **PROPOSAL NARRATIVE**

### **➤ Cover Page**

### **➤ Proposal Title**

The short title should clearly describe the issue or research problem to be addressed by the proposed scientific exchange

### **➤ Collaborating Foreign Country**

List the People's Republic of China.

### **➤ Type of Project**

List Short-term Scientific Exchange with China.

### **➤ Target Subject Area**

List the target subject area(s) addressed in the proposal.

### **➤ U.S. Principal Investigator(s)**

Include the name, title, institution, mailing address, telephone, fax, and email.

List the primary principal investigator first if there are co-principal investigators.

### **➤ Chinese Principal Investigator(s)**

Include the name, title, institution, mailing address, telephone, fax, and email of current Chinese collaborators. Chinese Principal Investigator is not required. The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) in China can and will identify contacts.

### **➤ Preferred Start and End Dates of the Scientific Exchange**

Indicate the preferred start and end dates for the team visit. Dates will need to be approved and cleared by the Ministry of Agriculture prior to making flight arrangements.

## **2. Abstract**

In a paragraph for the general public, describe the issue or research problem. Highlight the scientific exchange's benefits to both the U.S. and the People's Republic of China. Discuss how the results of the scientific exchange will contribute to solving the problem. Include the contributions of scientists in both countries.

## **3. Description**

### **Introduction**

Describe the scientific or technical issue. Indicate the status of any current activities on this topic with the People's Republic of China, including the contacts and institutions. Indicate whether the Foreign Agricultural Service has previously funded a related activity of yours, and provide the title and date of the activity.

### **Objectives of this Scientific Exchange**

List the objectives. The scientific exchange must address a 2009 Target Subject Area. The program does not provide funds for sabbatical study leaves or for attending conferences.

### **Benefits to U.S. Agriculture or Forestry**

Proposals must indicate a strong benefit to U.S. agriculture or forestry and how it may impact trade. Include plans for disseminating or using the results of the scientific exchange with China. Identify and, if possible, quantify benefits expected from the scientific cooperation.

### **Benefits to the People's Republic of China**

Describe the interests of China in collaborating on the proposed activity.

### **Cooperative Arrangements**

Describe the responsibilities of each institution.

## **4. Work Plan**

This section explains how you plan to accomplish your objectives and should include:

- Proposed dates of visits, including seasonal, geographic, and other considerations
- Description of how objectives will be met
- Proposed schedule of activities and location you want to visit.

## **5. References**

- Brief descriptions of the qualifications of the participating Principal Investigators

- Citations relevant to the project

## Budget

Since SCEP funds are not provided directly to the U.S. exchange teams visiting China under this program, no budget is required. Please be aware, however, that U.S. participants are responsible for their international airfare and stopovers between the U.S. and China.

## 2. Standard Form Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

The SF 424 may be downloaded at the SCEP website:  
<http://www.fas.usda.gov/icd/grants/scep/scep.asp>.

The SF 424 is also available for downloading at the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) website, with other standard grants management forms at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/grants\\_forms.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/grants_forms.html). This OMB site also has a guide for obtaining a DUNS number.

### Specific Information for SF 424

Specific Information for the SCEP to be used in completing the SF-424 includes the following items:

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| • Block 3 - Date Received by State   | Do <u>not</u> enter any information in this block.   |
| • Block 4 - Date Received by Federal   | Do <u>not</u> enter any information in this block.   |
| • Block 5 – Legal Name   | Enter information on the U.S. Institution  |
| • Block 8 - Type of Application  | Select “New.”  |
| • Block 10 - Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number Title                     | Enter 10 - 961<br>Scientific Cooperation Research Program                                  |
| • Block 16 - Is application subject to review by State Executive Order 12372 process | Select b. The program is <u>not</u> covered.   |
| • Block 15 - Estimated Funding<br>a. Federal<br>b. Applicant                         | Enter 0, the total requested from the SCEP.<br>Enter the U.S. Institution's contributions. |
| • Block 18 a—Authorized Representative   | Enter information on the administrative office that signs agreements for your institution. |

### DUNS Number

All federal assistance applications from institutions, including government agencies, and print and electronic submissions, must now include a DUNS number. A Dun and

Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of businesses worldwide.

A DUNS number may be obtained at no cost by calling toll-free at 1-866-705-5711. This is recommended as the quickest means of obtaining a new number if an institution does not already have one. Applicants can also obtain a DUNS number at <http://dnb.com/us/>. Please note that this method to obtain the DUNS number may take several weeks.

## **APPLICATION REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION**

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals will be peer reviewed by U.S. scientists. Projects will be selected according to how well they meet the following criteria:

1. Scientific or Technical Merit - Quality of proposal, well-defined problem, clear objectives, evidence of creativity and innovation, suitability of investigators and institutions, likelihood objectives can be achieved
2. Relevance - Addresses important U.S. agricultural or forestry problems, potential usefulness of research results, potential for knowledge and technology transfer
3. Potential for Furthering International Cooperation - Expected contributions and mutual benefits from collaboration

### **Notification of Awards**

Award and decline letters are expected to be sent to the U.S. Principal Investigators by March 2009.

## **AWARD ADMINISTRATION AND REPORTING**

### **Administration**

The U.S. investigators' institutions are expected to fund and arrange for only their international airfare to and from mainland China.

### **Reporting**

Short-term scientific exchanges will require only a single report, due at the end of your exchange visit.

## **AGENCY CONTACTS**

Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact the program manager to discuss proposals for short-term scientific exchanges with China. If you have questions, please contact the following:



- **Khaliaka Meardry, Project Manager, Scientific Exchanges Branch**

Telephone: (202) 690-1866, Email: [Khaliaka.Meardry@fas.usda.gov](mailto:Khaliaka.Meardry@fas.usda.gov)

or

- **Nora E. Banks, International Affairs Specialist, Scientific Exchanges Branch**

Telephone: (202) 720-3904, Email: [Nora.Banks@usda.gov](mailto:Nora.Banks@usda.gov)