

Supplemental and Alternative Crops Competitive Grants Program

FY 2008 Request for Applications

APPLICATION DEADLINE: June 9, 2008



U.S. Department of Agriculture

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

**COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE;
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**SUPPLEMENTAL AND ALTERNATIVE CROPS COMPETITIVE GRANTS
PROGRAM**

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.200.

DATES: Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on June 9, **2008 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time)**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding. Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is requesting comments regarding this RFA from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and will be used to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current RFA from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education and extension for use in formulating future RFAs for competitive programs. Written stakeholder comments on this RFA should be submitted in accordance with the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this Notice.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy, Oversight, and Funds Management Staff; Office of Extramural Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; USDA; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: RFP-OEP@csrees.usda.gov. (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the Supplemental and Alternative Crops Competitive Grants Program RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CSREES announces the availability of grant funds and requests applications for the Supplemental and Alternative Crops Competitive Grants Program (SACC) for fiscal year (FY) 2008 to support **Canola crop research** in the development of superior germplasm, establishment and extension of various methods of planting, cultivation, harvesting, processing, and transfer of such applied research from experimental sites to on farm practice as soon as practicable. The amount available for support of this program in FY 2008 is approximately \$780,000.

This notice identifies the objectives for SACC projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a SACC grant. CSREES additionally requests stakeholder input from any interested party for use in the development of the next RFA for this program.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION | 4 |
| A. Legislative Authority and Background..... | 4 |
| B. Purpose and Priorities | 4 |
| C. Program Area Description | 5 |
| PART II—AWARD INFORMATION..... | 6 |
| A. Available Funding | 6 |
| B. Types of Applications..... | 6 |
| C. Project Types | 6 |
| PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION..... | 7 |
| A. Eligible Applicants | 7 |
| B. Cost Sharing or Matching..... | 7 |
| PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION | 8 |
| A. Electronic Application Package..... | 8 |
| B. Content and Form of Application Submission..... | 9 |
| C. Submission Dates and Times..... | 11 |
| D. Funding Restrictions..... | 11 |
| E. Other Submission Requirements..... | 11 |
| PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS..... | 12 |
| A. General..... | 12 |
| B. Evaluation Criteria..... | 12 |
| C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality | 13 |
| D. Organizational Management Information | 13 |
| PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION | 14 |
| A. General..... | 14 |
| B. Award Notice..... | 14 |
| C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements | 15 |
| D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements..... | 16 |
| PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT | 17 |
| PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION | 18 |
| A. Access to Review Information..... | 18 |
| B. Use of Funds; Changes | 18 |
| C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards..... | 19 |
| D. Regulatory Information | 19 |
| E. Definitions..... | 19 |

PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

Pursuant to Section 1473D of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act (7 USC 3319d(c)) as amended, the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Administrator of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), is authorized to make competitive grants to colleges and universities (*as described below*), other Federal agencies, and private sector entities to conduct fundamental and applied research related to the development of new commercial products derived from natural plant material for industrial, medical, and agricultural applications. SACC grants are made to develop and introduce income producing supplemental and alternative crops.

In 1993 Congress appropriated funds to establish a nationally coordinated research program for the emerging U.S. canola industry. CSREES has awarded grants from this funding authority to ensure the greatest possible cooperation and interaction between participating universities and the private sector on both a regional and national basis.

B. Purpose and Priorities

Stakeholder input identifies canola as a sustainable and high value commodity, which improves the current agro-ecosystem. Currently, canola is a major crop in most countries with northern latitudes similar to Canada. North American canola is grown primarily in regions of Western Canada, with some acreage being planted in Ontario and the Pacific Northwest. In Canada, the ten-year average is 11.3 million acres harvested. U.S. canola acreage is 1.1 million acres, of which 90% is grown in North Dakota.

There are similarities between modern canola development and the evolution of soybean as a major crop during the 20th century. In the very early 1900s, the soybean was a minor prostrate legume harvested primarily as a forage crop. Within 60 years, the soybean became a major crop due to changes in agriculture, including production technology, genetics, post harvest management, and market utilization. Technological advancements in agriculture continue to improve modern canola production.

Two major canola oil uses are (a) human and animal food and (b) industrial applications.

Food uses: Canola oil may provide a health advantage in human food use. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration authorized a qualified health claim for canola oil for its ability to reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, due to its high unsaturated fat content. Canola oil is high in oleic acid relative to other vegetable oils and has been competitive in price with other cooking oils.

Canola meal is fed to livestock as a protein supplement and consists of about 38 percent protein. In Canada, canola meal is recommended for up to 10-20 percent of the daily protein supplement for chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, pigs, dairy and beef animals.

Industrial uses: The U.S. Army has demonstrated that canola oil is acceptable as hydraulic fluid; a major contractor for elevators in New York City uses canola oil based hydraulic fluid. These

industrial uses have the environmentally positive characteristics of low toxicity and environmental biodegradability.

FY 2008 SACC funding supports development of canola as a viable supplemental and alternative crop in the U.S. SACC research should focus primarily on field production, including, but not limited to, genetic improvement. Successful applicants will have documented priority setting abilities, experience with stakeholder involvement, and experience in national coordination of research. Priority will be given to applications that provide evidence of multi-state cooperation with a minimum of three state cooperators.

Canola research applications may, but are not required to, address the following high priority areas (listed here in alphabetical order):

- Biodiesel/bio-products;
- Blackleg disease;
- Health & nutrition;
- Input cost reduction;
- Pod shattering; and
- Winter canola production systems.

Applications (or components of applications) related to “education & communication” addressing any of the research areas above will be considered.

C. Program Area Description

Research to be funded should focus primarily on field production, including, but not limited to, genetic improvement. Priority will be given to applications that provide evidence of multistate cooperation and should list a minimum of three state cooperators.

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. Approximately \$780,000 will be available to fund applications in FY 2008. Requests for funding of an individual application may not exceed \$180,000.

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2008, applications may be submitted to the SACC Program as one of the following two types of requests:

(1) New application. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the SACC Program. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

(2) Renewal application. This is a project application that requests additional funding for a project beyond the period that was approved in an original or amended award. Applications for renewed funding must contain the same information as required for new applications, and additionally must contain a Progress Report attached as a PDF (see additional Project Information Part IVB2c). Renewal applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

C. Project Types

Priority will be given to applications that provide evidence of multi-state cooperation and list a minimum of three state cooperators. Requests for funding may not exceed \$180,000 and the project period may be up to five years. However, if applicants receive funding for a 5-year project period, the agency will not be able to grant a no-cost extension of time for those projects.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by colleges and universities (see Definitions – Part VIII, E.), other Federal agencies, and private sector entities.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project. An applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of an application deadline will result in CSREES returning the application without review or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude CSREES from making an award.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

CSREES does not require matching support for this program and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria.

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to CSREES in response to this RFA.

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the PD/PI first contact an Authorized Representative (AR)(also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative or AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grant.gov. If the organization is not prepared, the AR should see http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp for steps for preparing to submit applications through Grants.gov.

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. Download and install PureEdge Viewer, a small, free program that provides access to the grant application. See http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#pureedge.
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on “**Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions**,” enter the funding opportunity number **USDA-CSREES-OP-001591** in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “[CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov](#).” This Guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If assistance is needed to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating PureEdge forms, using PureEdge with a Macintosh computer), refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

- Grants.gov customer support
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726
Business Hours: Monday through Friday 7:00 am – 9:00 pm Eastern Standard Time
Email: support@grants.gov

See <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared following Part V and VI of the document entitled “[A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.](#)” This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed in order to prepare an application in response to this RFA. If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.

Note the attachment requirements (e.g., portable document format) in Part III section 3. of the Guide. ANY APPLICATIONS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM CSREES REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from CSREES review. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business on the closing date in the RFA.

If you do not own PDF-generating software, Grants.gov provides online tools to assist applicants. Users will find a link to “Convert Documents to PDF” on <http://grants.gov/assets/PDFConversion.pdf>.

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

2. R&R Other Project Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 3. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

- a. Field 6. Project Summary/Abstract (PDF Attachment). The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of SACC.
- b. Field 7. Project Narrative (PDF Attachment).

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed twelve (12) pages of written text regardless of whether it is single or double spaced and up to three (3) additional pages for figures and tables. This maximum (15 pages) has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

- i) Introduction. A clear statement of the long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives or research questions of the proposed project should be included. Clearly specify the high priority area of Canola research and the methods for technology transfer implementation. Summarize the body of knowledge or other past activities that substantiate the need for the proposed project. Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities related to the proposed project including the work of key project personnel. Describe the qualifications of key personnel, adequacy of facilities, and the management capability of the applicant institution. Preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed research should be included in this section.

ii) Rationale and Significance. Concisely present the rationale behind the proposed research. Document the priority setting process and stakeholder involvement, and any national coordination of research. Describe how the applications' goals and priorities relate to potential long-range improvement in and sustainability of U.S. agriculture. Priority will be given to applications that provide evidence of a nationally coordinated crop development project involving a national priority setting process. Further priority will be given to applications that leverage multi-state cooperation and list a minimum of three state cooperators. An application request for funding may not exceed \$180,000. Novel ideas or contributions that the proposed project offers should also be discussed in this section.

iii) Approach. The activities proposed or problems being addressed must be clearly stated and the approaches being applied clearly described. Specifically, this section must include:

- A description of the activities proposed and the sequence in which the activities are to be performed;
- Methods to be used in carrying out the proposed project, including the feasibility of the methods;
- Expected outcomes;
- Means by which results will be analyzed, assessed, or interpreted; and
- Uses for results or products.

c. Field 11. Additional Project Information (PDF Attachment). For Renewal Applications, attach a Progress Report here.

3. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 4. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

4. R&R Personal Data – As noted in Part V, 5. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide, the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award. If completing the information, **do not enter any data in the field requesting the social security number.**

5. R&R Budget

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 6. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

6. Supplemental Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 1. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 2. Program Code. Enter the program code name “**Canola Research**” and the program code “**HW**”.

b. Field 8. Conflict of Interest List. Please include a conflict of interest list.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by COB on June 9, 2008 (**5:00 p.m. Eastern Time**). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

Correspondence regarding submitted applications will be sent using e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received correspondence **from CSREES** regarding a submitted application within 30 days of submission of the application, please contact the Program Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.**

D. Funding Restrictions

Section 706 of the FY 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act, (Pub. L. 110-161) limits indirect costs to 20 percent of the total Federal funds provided under each award. Therefore, when preparing budgets, applicants should limit their requests for recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of their institution’s official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 20 percent of total Federal funds awarded. Another method of calculating the maximum allowable is 25 percent of the total direct costs.

E. Other Submission Requirements

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.”

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

Each application will be evaluated in a 2-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel.

Reviewers will be selected based upon training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) The level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields; (c) the need to include as reviewers other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs; (d) the need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) the need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness to producers and the general public of each application.

B. Evaluation Criteria

Priority will be given to applications that provide evidence of multi-state cooperation and list a minimum of three state cooperators. The evaluation criteria below will be used in reviewing applications submitted in response to this RFA:

General criteria to be used to award applications: Value 50%

- Documented experience in nationally coordinated crop development projects involving a national priority setting process.
- Descriptive stakeholder process (es) by which priorities were identified.
- Documented experience with collaborative, comprehensive research on canola.
- Demonstrated capability to implement a technology transfer component.

Specific criteria to be used to award applications: Value 50%

1. Scientific Merit of the Application for Research: Value 25%

- Novelty, innovation, uniqueness, and originality;
- Ability to transfer knowledge gained from these systems to organisms of importance to U.S. agriculture;
- Clarity and delineation of objectives;
- Adequacy of the description of the undertaking and suitability and feasibility of methodology;
- Demonstration of feasibility through preliminary and current data; and,

- Probability of success of project.

2. Qualifications of Project Personnel, Adequacy of Facilities, and Project Management Capability: Value 25%

- Qualifications of applicant (individual or team) to conduct the proposed project, including performance record and potential for future accomplishments.

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution shall be determined by reference to the current Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, Virginia 22042. Phone: (703) 532-2300. Web site: <http://www.hepinc.com>.

Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of peer reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

D. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one time basis, with updates on an as needed basis, as part of the responsibility determination prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another CSREES program. CSREES will provide copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the preaward process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors which may exclude an applicant from receiving Federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of CSREES shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the awarding official of CSREES as the effective date of the grant shall be no later than September 30 of the Federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. It should be noted that the project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by CSREES under this RFA shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's assistance regulations (parts 3015 and 3019 of 7 CFR).

B. Award Notice

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the following:

- (1) Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the Administrator has issued an award under the terms of this request for applications;
- (2) Title of project;
- (3) Name(s) and institution(s) of PDs chosen to direct and control approved activities;
- (4) Identifying award number assigned by the Department;
- (5) Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the Administrator during the project period;
- (7) Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
- (8) Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
- (9) Applicable award terms and conditions (see <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view CSREES award terms and conditions);
- (10) Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

(11) Other information or provisions deemed necessary by CSREES to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several Federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These include, but are not limited to:

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121—USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

7 CFR Part 3015—USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, implementing OMB directives (i.e., OMB Circular Nos. A-21 and A-122, now codified at 2 CFR Parts 220 and 230) and incorporating provisions of 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308 (formerly the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Pub. L. No. 95-224), as well as general policy requirements applicable to recipients of Departmental financial assistance.

7 CFR Part 3017—USDA implementation of Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and 7 CFR Part 3021—Governmentwide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Grants).

7 CFR Part 3018—USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying. Imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of Federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

7 CFR Part 3019—USDA implementation of OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non profit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3407—CSREES procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

29 U.S.C. 794 (section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 7 CFR Part 15b (USDA implementation of statute) —prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in Federally assisted programs.

35 U.S.C. 200 et seq. —Bayh Dole Act, controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in Federally assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

Grantees are required to submit initial project information and annual and summary reports to CSREES' Current Research Information System (CRIS). The CRIS database contains narrative project information, progress/impact statements, and final technical reports that are made available to the public. For applications recommended for funding, instructions on preparing and submission of project documentation will be provided to the applicant by the agency contact. **Documentation must be submitted to CRIS before CSREES funds will be released.** Project reports will be requested by the CRIS office when required. For more information about CRIS, visit <http://cris.csrees.usda.gov>.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact [Dr. James Parochetti](#); National Program Leader; Plant and Animal Systems, CSREES, USDA; Stop 2220; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2220; telephone: (202) 401-4354; fax: (202) 401-4888; e-mail: jparochetti@csrees.usda.gov.

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Access to Review Information

Copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments will be sent to the applicant PD after the review process has been completed.

B. Use of Funds; Changes

1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility

Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, the awardee may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of award funds.

2. Changes in Project Plans

a. The permissible changes by the awardee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other similar aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the awardee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the program contact.

b. Changes in approved goals or objectives shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests for such changes be approved which are outside the scope of the original approved project.

c. Changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes.

d. Transfers of actual performance of the substantive programmatic work in whole or in part and provisions for payment of funds, whether or not Federal funds are involved, shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

e. The project period may be extended by CSREES without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) as the ADO determines may be necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed five years. Any extension of time shall be conditioned upon prior request by the awardee and approval in writing by the ADO, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of award.

f. Changes in Approved Budget: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved budget must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to instituting such changes if the revision will involve transfers or expenditures of

amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or award.

C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of CSREES transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary 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 have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. The original copy of an application that does not result in an award will be retained by the Agency for a period of three years. Other copies will be destroyed. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

D. Regulatory Information

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

E. Definitions

For the purpose of this program, the following definitions are applicable:

Administrator means the Administrator of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) and any other officer or employee of the Department to whom the authority involved is delegated.

Authorized departmental officer means the Secretary or any employee of the Department who has the authority to issue or modify grant instruments on behalf of the Secretary.

Authorized representative (also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative) means the president, director, or chief executive officer or other designated official of the applicant organization who has the authority to commit the resources of the organization.

Budget period means the interval of time (usually 12 months) into which the project period is divided for budgetary and reporting purposes.

Cash contributions means the applicants cash outlay, including the outlay of money contributed to the applicant by non-Federal third parties.

College or University means an educational institution in any State which: (1) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary

education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate; (2) is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education; (3) provides an educational program for which a baccalaureate degree or any other higher degree is awarded; (4) is a public or other nonprofit institution; and (5) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association.

Department or USDA means the United States Department of Agriculture.

Grant means the award by the Secretary of funds to an eligible organization or individual to assist in meeting the costs of conducting, for the benefit of the public, an identified project which is intended and designed to accomplish the purpose of the program as identified in these guidelines.

Grantee means an organization designated in the grant award document as the responsible legal entity to which a grant is awarded.

Matching means that portion of allowable project costs not borne by the Federal Government, including the value of in-kind contributions.

Peer review means an evaluation of a proposed project for scientific or technical quality and relevance performed by experts with the scientific knowledge and technical skills to conduct the proposed work or to give expert advice on the merits of a proposal.

Prior approval means written approval evidencing prior consent by an authorized departmental officer as defined above.

Project means the particular activity within the scope of the program supported by a grant award.

Project director means the single individual designated in the grant application and approved by the Secretary who is responsible for the direction and management of the project.

Project period means the period, as stated in the award document, during which Federal sponsorship begins and ends.

Research activity means a scientific investigation or inquiry that results in the generation of knowledge.

Secretary means the Secretary of Agriculture and any other officer or employee of the Department to whom the authority involved is delegated.