

Excerpt from the 1998 Farm Bill mandating the Office of Scientific Quality Review:

SEC. 103. RELEVANCE AND MERIT OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND EDUCATION FUNDED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

(d) SCIENTIFIC PEER REVIEW OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH-

- (1) PEER REVIEW PROCEDURES- The Secretary shall establish procedures that ensure scientific peer review of all research activities conducted by the Department.
- (2) Review panel required.--As part of the procedures established under paragraph (1), a review panel shall verify, at least once every 5 years, that each research activity of the Department and research conducted under each research program of the Department has scientific merit and relevance.
- (3) Mission area.--If the research activity or program to be reviewed is included in the research, educational, and economics mission area of the Department, the review panel shall consider--
 - (A) the scientific merit and relevance of the activity or research in light of the priorities established pursuant to section 102; and
 - (B) the national or multistate significance of the activity or research.
- (4) Composition of review panel.--
 - (A) In general.--A review panel shall be composed of individuals with scientific expertise, a majority of whom are not employees of the agency whose research is being reviewed.
 - (B) Scientists from colleges and universities.--To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall use scientists from colleges and universities to serve on the review panels.
- (5) Submission of results.--The results of the panel reviews shall be submitted to the Advisory Board.