

CSREES Administrator's Report to the Partnership

Fall 2004

Advancing Knowledge for the
Food and Agricultural System



Managing for the Future Is Key to Success, Innovation

As 2004 draws to a close, CSREES begins its second decade of commitment to advancing knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities. Our specific goals and objectives are defined in our strategic plan which emphasizes enhancing economic opportunities for agricultural producers; improving the quality of life in rural America; enhancing the protection and safety of the nation's agricultural and food supply; improving the nation's nutrition and health; and protecting and enhancing the nation's natural resource base and environment. Achieving these goals requires a comprehensive national effort by researchers and educators to continuously improve the knowledge base on which policies, practices, and innovations are derived. In light of severe constraints on Federal and State resources, we need to coordinate efforts to effectively utilize the funding we have and strengthen arguments for sustaining and growing funding in the future.

Good management is more essential than ever. The way we operate at CSREES reflects the President's Management Agenda, which concentrates on human resource planning, financial integrity, budget and performance integration, and implementation of e-government. We have paid close attention to each of these elements. The past decade has taught one great lesson to our organization, and I believe to our partners, as well. Just as in riding a bicycle, forward momentum is necessary to maintain balance. And what fuels that momentum is a commitment to customer service and an openness to changing the way we do business.

With growing pressure on domestic programs such as agricultural research and education, innovation may be the most important tool we have in our arsenal. Recently, the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy hosted a national innovation conference to spark new ideas for programs, funding, and cooperation at the institutional and multi-institutional levels. At the national level, a Congressionally-mandated task force is recommending new administrative and funding mechanisms to increase support for agricultural and related sciences. These efforts, coupled with our internal commitment to reviewing, revising, and continuously improving our programs, are likely to make "innovation" a primary theme for CSREES as we enter our second decade.

Colien Hefferan

The mission of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is to advance knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities.



CSREES Honors Ten with Inauguration of Hall of Fame

Ten outstanding individuals became the inaugural inductees into the CSREES Hall of Fame October 21, 2004, during the Agency's celebration of its 10th anniversary. The Hall of Fame recognizes outstanding work by an individual who has advocated and supported the fundamental efforts of CSREES to integrate research, education, and extension in fulfilling the Agency's mission to advance knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities. Inductees were presented with a commemorative Waterford crystal rendering of the U.S. Capitol dome. Their names will be engraved on a plaque that will hang at the CSREES Waterfront Centre headquarters in Washington, D.C. The 2004 CSREES Hall of Fame inductees are:



Jane Coulter's leadership helped to develop the Agriculture in the Classroom program, Higher Education Programs, and the Multicultural Alliances program which today form a key programmatic unit within CSREES. Through her effort, concepts with no funding or staff in the beginning became internationally recognized programs. Dr. Coulter's leadership stimulated an exciting era of transition and change for CSREES and USDA. She is credited as much as anyone in shaping CSREES into a vibrant agency. Jane served as the Deputy Administrator of Science and Education Resources Development and ended her 22-year career as Deputy Administrator of Families, 4-H, and Nutrition. In 2001, she earned the Presidential Rank Award of Distinguished Executive from President George W. Bush. Coulter's leadership has also been recognized by President Bill Clinton and by USDA Secretaries John Block, Clayton Yeutter, Mike Espy, and Ann M. Veneman; the Agricultural Research Service; CSREES; and numerous private sector organizations.



Dan Dooley served as a member and Vice Chair of the USDA National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board (NAREEEAB) for a number of years. He also served as chairman and remains an active member of the Council for Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching (CARET) Board. He has been a strong supporter of agriculture throughout his career and has helped CSREES grow through strong support and input into strengthening its programs. Dan holds an undergraduate degree from the University of California, Davis, and a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of the

Pacific, McGeorge School of Law. He has served as chair of the Agricultural Issues Center Advisory Council at the University of California, and he is a graduate of the California Agricultural Leadership Program. He is also a member of the Farm Foundation Board of Trustees and the Bennett Agricultural Roundtable. Prior to forming his law firm in 1993, Dan served as member and chair of the California Water Commission and as Deputy Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture.



Rodney Foil, after a long and distinguished career at Mississippi State University, came to CSREES to help oversee the Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems (IFAFS). He accomplished his mission and awarded more than \$240 million in multidisciplinary, multi-institutional grants to address high-priority agricultural problems. The fruits of his work are still being reaped with results from these grants. When the Associate Administrator position opened unexpectedly, Foil selflessly assumed the responsibilities on an interim basis. Helping CSREES was not a new role for Foil. In 1994, as chair of the Board on Agriculture, Foil worked with board members and advocacy groups to create a separate and strengthened CSREES as an agency, rather than a subdivision of the Agricultural Research Service. Many believe that no other person has contributed so much of himself to nurture and stabilize the Federal-State partnership as has Rodney Foil: a true friend of CSREES.



Vic Lechtenberg, from the early days on his family's Nebraska farm to his long and stellar career at Purdue University, has been a leader in integrating the research and extension missions. Vic served as chair of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board for 6 years and was instrumental in crafting the legislation that authorized the IFAFS program as part of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998. He is a past president of the Council of Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) and has served on many other boards and committees whose mission has been to promote agricultural research, education, and extension. As Purdue's new Vice Provost for Engagement, Lechtenberg will continue to provide leadership for and support for CSREES.



Martin Massengale's career as a teacher, researcher, leader, and administrator has been marked by high standards of performance and a steadfast commitment to excellence. He currently serves as the chairman of USDA's National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board.

From the beginning of his long career as a teacher/research assistant to his work as an administrator at the University of Arizona, to his roles as Vice Chancellor of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Nebraska and Chancellor and President of the University of Nebraska System, he has been an effective leader and supporter of the concept of integrating research, education, and extension. Massengale has served agriculture, higher education, and society by providing effective leadership in many organizations. His efforts have been and will continue to be important to the success of CSREES.



Madeline Mellinger has served as the Florida delegate to the Council for Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching (CARET) of the Board on Agriculture at the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) since 1997. She also serves on several University of Florida

advisory boards and has been a strong supporter of many CSREES programs. She has received high acclaim for her efforts to promote Integrated Pest Management (IPM) adoption and reduce the use of high-risk pesticides. There is no better friend of sustainable agriculture than Madeline Mellinger. Luckily for CSREES, Mellinger's new passion is the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). Mellinger has served the agricultural community through many leadership positions and activities. She has been an advisor to the U.S. Congress, the National Academy of Sciences, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal and State Extension Service, and various universities. She has been appointed by three successive U.S. Secretaries of Agriculture to the National Sustainable Agriculture Advisory Council. Mellinger is an important advisor and supporter of CSREES.



Rubie Mize played a vital role in the management and re-engineering of the National Information Management and Support System (NIMSS), which was originally developed for the Northeast Region State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors but has been transformed into a national system for the

management of information related to the multi-state research portfolio. Mize has served in this role since 1996, which also included initiating and managing partnerships with various Federal agencies, regional and state land-grant universities, and the private sector. Rubie has a natural ability to organize and manage and came to her current position following 8 years of work for the United Nations, serving in Switzerland, Iraq, Kuwait, and Sudan working with the High Commission for Refugees where she designed programs to deliver food and basic supplies to refugees, and where she negotiated key agreements with international relief organizations to provide logistics, sanitation, shelter, and educational services. Later, with the United Nations Development Program, she assisted in the development of the National Civil Services Personnel System, and in projects to assist with Kuwaiti economic development following the 1991 Gulf War. Mize's efforts have served the system and CSREES very well in meeting important commitments to sustain the important programs we administer.



Eldon Ortman's entire career epitomizes the integration of research, teaching, and extension. For three decades Eldon has worked unselfishly to promote the nation's agricultural system. His efforts in IPM have broad-ranging significance. Beyond his efforts for IPM, he has provided leadership in roles

including service as a USDA/ARS Center Director, a university department head, Chair of the North Central Experiment Station Directors, advisor to regional research committees, and president of his scientific society. In 2001 Eldon came to CSREES on an Interagency Personnel Agreement. His work at CSREES encompassed broad matters involving policy and management. His efforts have had a significant impact on CSREES and on our partner institutions, and his overall career of service and initiative have profoundly affected the agricultural community.



Leodrey Williams has made a career of helping deliver educational programs and service to citizens outside the mainstream of society. During the 1994 reorganization of USDA and the merger of the Extension Service and the Cooperative State Research Service, Williams was appointed Associate Administrator of the

newly formed CSREES. He held this position until he returned to the state extension administrator's role at Southern University in July 1995. Leodrey was a great friend and supporter of CSREES early on and has continued his commitment to the quest to

advance knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities. He currently serves as Chancellor at Southern University. He has served as president of the Association of Extension Administrators, Executive Committee member of the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP), member of USDA's Joint Council of Food and Agriculture, and on many other boards and councils that support higher education and the general mission of research, education, and extension.



Edward M. (Ted) Wilson's career in academic and public service spanning three decades exemplifies effective leadership in government. His organizational skills, broad and profound knowledge of science, and abilities in research administration have been widely recognized, not only in CSREES, but in other government

agencies, the university community, and numerous private organizations. Two U.S. Presidents have honored him with Presidential Rank Awards for his meritorious service as a Senior Executive. Wilson's involvement with agricultural science and knowledge includes formal studies at McGill University in Canada and at The Ohio State University, where he has been named a "Distinguished Alumnus" by the OSU Agricultural Alumni Association. Wilson taught at Tuskegee University and served as Dean at Lincoln University before coming to Washington, DC. At each institution, Wilson became both a campus and community leader, demonstrating the same strong interpersonal skills that he employed throughout his federal career. Wilson has been an extremely effective advocate for the knowledge system that is the foundation of our mission in CSREES. His ability to include a wide array of employees, customers, and stakeholders has been a hallmark of his great success in government. Wilson retired as CSREES Deputy Administrator for Competitive Programs in January 2003.

For more information on the CSREES Hall of Fame contact Jim Spurling, CSREES, USDA—jspurling@csrees.usda.gov.

CSREES Increases Knowledge of Agriculturally Important Microorganisms through Genomics

Ann Lichens-Park, National Program Leader, Competitive Programs

Research supported by CSREES is harnessing the power of genomics to better understand and manage agriculturally important microorganisms. Microorganisms play critical roles in agricultural productivity and sustainability. As pathogens, microorganisms can be fatal to humans, livestock, and crop plants. Microorganisms can also be beneficial by helping animals digest their feed or by helping plants fight disease and obtain nitrogen.

The foundation for microbial genomics is DNA sequencing. The genome sequence of a microorganism identifies the order of DNA base pairs and provides a blueprint for how the organism functions. Early detection methods are vital for responding to outbreaks of harmful microorganisms. A completed genome sequence has the potential to lead to development of new and rapid methods to detect harmful microorganisms.

CSREES is beginning its fifth year of collaboration with the National Science Foundation (NSF) on a jointly offered competitive grants program, the Microbial Genome Sequencing Program (MGSP). Projects supported through the Program are producing impressive results. In June 2004, the Joint Genome Institute announced the completion of the genome sequences of the pathogen that causes Sudden Oak Death (SOD), a destructive disease that is threatening forests and nurseries throughout the United States, and a closely related pathogen, *Phytophthora sojae*, which causes economically significant losses in soybeans. These projects were supported by fiscal year 2002 MGSP awards from CSREES (\$1.3 million) and NSF (\$1 million) to the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and by funding from the Department of Energy to the Joint Genome Institute. The CSREES Functional Genomics of Agriculturally Important Organisms Program builds on the MGSP by supporting research that uses the complete genome sequence to reveal new molecular information regarding the biology and function of a microorganism. Funding for the Functional Genomics of Agriculturally Important Organisms Program and CSREES' \$5 million contribution to the MGSP are from the National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program.

The Microbe Project is a United States Interagency Working Group that includes USDA-CSREES, NSF, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Energy, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Executive Office of Science and Technology Policy. The recently appointed Chair of the Microbe Project is Dr. Anna Palmisano, CSREES' Deputy Administrator for Competitive Programs. The Microbe Project is under the Subcommittee on Biotechnology and the Committee on Science of the National Science and Technology Council. Through the Microbe Project, CSREES is coordinating and partnering with other federal agencies to support research and education in microbial genomics.

Knowledge of the microorganisms present in agricultural and natural ecosystems is limited, in part because most microorganisms cannot be cultured in the lab and, therefore, are difficult to study. The advent of new methods for investigating microbial communities using genomic techniques provides an opportunity to address this knowledge gap. CSREES is exploring a new collaboration with the NSF (based on its Microbial Observatories Program) to support

work that will lead to a better understanding of the diversity of microbial populations in agricultural settings and the influence of those microorganisms on agricultural productivity and sustainability.

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers (and Fishermen) Adds New Constituents to Extension Service

Mark Bailey, National Program Leader, Economics and Community Systems

In August 2003, Congress amended the Trade Act of 1974, and established a new Trade Adjustments Assistance (TAA) Program for Farmers. CSREES became a major partner in this program to ensure that one dictate of the law is addressed. The amended law makes available \$90 million per year through FY 2007 and specified that before producers could receive TAA benefits, they must have received technical information and advice on ways to adjust to import competition from an "Extension Service agent or employee." During the process of finalizing the Final Rule implementing the program, harvesters of certain fisheries, including wild shrimp and salmon fisheries, were added to the list of eligible producers. This added a new constituency to the Extension Service list of clientele, but also made carrying out CSREES' and Extension's responsibilities much more complex.

An additional challenge was the stipulation that CSREES and Cooperative Extension had only 45 days from the time a petition is approved to develop and deliver technical information and advice to producers and fishermen. The good news: any direct expenses associated with the development and delivery of technical information and advice are reimbursable.

In the first year, the TAA program received 47 petitions requesting eligibility for a number of commodities; 12 were approved. Four agricultural commodities--Maine wild blueberries, Florida lychees, farm-raised catfish in 18 states, and farm-raised shrimp in the states noted below--were included. The rest of the approved petitions dealt with fisheries (Alaskan and Washington salmon, and South Carolina, Texas, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, North Carolina and Arizona shrimp). Once a petition is approved, any producer in the states for which the petition has been filed, upon application for benefits, is immediately eligible to receive technical information and advice from an Extension Service agent or employee.

From the onset, CSREES and Cooperative Extension needed to develop a management tool that could quickly react to an approved petition and then develop relevant, useful technical information and advice on the options producers or fishermen have in adjusting to import competition. To that end, CSREES approached the Regional Risk Management Education Center

Directors to serve as coordinators to meet program responsibilities. They agreed to undertake this role before fisheries were added to the list of eligible commodities. Cooperative agreements were signed with each Regional Risk Management Education Center's host university (University of Delaware, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Texas A&M University, Washington State University, and the Digital Center at the University of Minnesota).

It is an understatement to say that Cooperative Extension responded magnificently to these challenges! All eligible applicants received technical training. Receiving the training and meeting other requirements made them eligible to receive benefits, including eligibility for the U.S. Department of Labor retraining. The Western Center for Risk Management coordinated the information development and delivery for Alaskan and Washington salmon. Over 6,000 Alaskan salmon permit holders and crew members, located in 44 states and 6 foreign countries, applied for TAA benefits. Each region of the United States had a number of Alaskan salmon permit holders and crew members, and all regions were involved in providing technical information to them. Under a subcontract from Cooperative Extension, the University of Alaska-Fairbanks Marine Advisory Program prepared the technical information used in all the states, and also delivered literally hundreds of training sessions serving over 167 communities in Alaska alone. The University of Washington Sea Grant program developed and delivered information to that State's salmon harvesters. The Southern Regional Risk Management Education Center coordinated technical information development and delivery that involved sessions in nearly every state in the South through subcontracts with a number of states (most were Cooperative Extension state offices; at least one was a Sea Grant program). Educational materials on shrimp were developed principally by Texas A&M University; on catfish principally by Mississippi State University; and on lychees by the University of Florida. In the North Central Region, while there were no eligible commodities approved, the North Central Center, with assistance from the University of Minnesota, delivered technical information for catfish producers and Alaskan salmon permit holders and crew members in a number of states. The Northeast Center coordinated through the University of Maine Cooperative Extension the development of very detailed technical information on wild blueberries and conducted training sessions for all eligible applicants. The Center, principally through the Cooperative Extension Service of the University of Delaware and Cornell University, conducted sessions for Alaskan salmon harvesters residing throughout the region. It should also be noted that excellent working relationships and close coordination were developed with the Foreign Agricultural Service and the Farm Service Agency, at the federal, state, and county levels.

The technical information developed by the regional centers is in a consistent format and stored at the Digital Center (<http://www.aaforfarmers.org/>). The material is designed to inform producers or fishermen on the industry outlook, analyze their present business condition, elicit future goals, and provide alternatives to meet those goals. Other benefits, including Department of Labor retraining benefits, are also discussed.

The bottom line is that the CSREES and Cooperative Extension developed a systematic approach to a very real-world information development and delivery challenge. It was only through working closely together that so many accomplishments were achieved, thereby more than fulfilling the CSREES and Cooperative Extension requirements and obligations of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program for Farmers (and Fishermen).

Phills Completes IPA, CSREES and ARS Release Collaboration Report

CSREES and the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) have completed an interagency collaboration report, the result of an assignment carried out by Bobby R. Phills, a professor at Florida A&M University. Dr. Phills was asked to conduct a study to identify ways to enhance interagency collaboration between CSREES and ARS as part of an Interagency Personnel Act agreement. Dr. Phills assembled a nationwide team representing stakeholders and customers from land-grant universities, other federal agencies, as well as CSREES and ARS. The recommendations emanating from this group of stakeholders have been captured in Dr. Phills' final report. The web page link is: <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/about/offices/caet.html>. Dr. Phills completed his interagency personnel agreement (IPA) in October and has returned to Florida A&M University. Contact: Bobby Phills—bobby@phills.net

CSREES-ECOP Joint Task Force on Managing a Changing Portfolio

In April CSREES and ECOP formed a joint task force to discuss issues and make recommendations related to the changing funding mix used to operate Cooperative Extension programs. At the first meeting of the task force at the end of April, the group composed of extension directors and administrators from every region and several CSREES staff members discussed many of the funding challenges facing Cooperative Extension. These included the changing contributions of state, federal, and local governments, issues related to the collection of user fees for extension programming, privatization of extension activities, and the growth of competitive funds in the extension portfolio. At a later meeting in October, the task force discussed initial recommendations to address those issues. A draft of the report and recommendations will be

presented to the Extension Section at the November NASULGC meeting in San Diego. Following that presentation, extension partners will be able to comment on the draft with a final presentation to directors and administrators in February 2005. Contact: Phil Schwab—pschwab@csrees.usda.gov.

National Survey to Gauge Customer Satisfaction Planned

This past September, CSREES released a new 5-year Workforce Plan to help the Agency effectively forecast future needs for recruiting and selecting future personnel and retraining or restructuring the current workforce. The plan was prepared in compliance with the President's Management Agenda initiative to improve human capital planning.

Implementation of the plan calls for establishing customer service standards and for conducting a national survey to gauge the Agency's level of customer satisfaction. Deputy Administrator Louise Ebaugh is providing executive leadership to this broad effort assisted by CSREES national program leader Larry Miller. Assisting as a consultant to the project is K. Jane Coulter. They will be seeking guidance and feedback from our partners on several aspects of the project. Contact: Louise Ebaugh—lebaugh@csrees.usda.gov

The 1890 Agroforestry Consortium Takes Off

The 1890 Agroforestry Consortium is a team of 1890 university and USDA government agency partners with a mission to develop and advance agroforestry research, teaching, and extension among the 1890 land-grant universities and Tuskegee University using multi-disciplinary teams of faculty and staff working in partnership with government agencies and other entities. The Consortium recently met for the first time since inception and has announced the development of the group's mission, vision, and strategic directions. This initiative will significantly expand 1890 university agroforestry partnership opportunities with CSREES, the Forest Service, and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

The Consortium includes Joshua Idassi, Consortium chair, Tennessee State University; Greg Ruark, Director of the USDA National Agroforestry Center; Pete Roussopoulos, Director of the Southern Research Station of the USDA Forest Service; James Hill, 1890 SARE Liaison; Fort Valley State University; Karl Dalla Rosa, Forest Stewardship Program Manager; USDA Forest Service; Jim Robinson, USDA-NRCS Agroforester; Fulbert Namwamba, Southern University; Gwendolyn Boyd, Alcorn State University; Rory Fraser, Alabama A&M University; Rao Mentreddy, Alabama A&M University; and George Brown, Alabama A&M University. CSREES representatives include Catalino Blanche, Forest Biology national program leader; Eric Norland, Forest Resources

Management national program leader; and Christy Pereira, Natural Resources and Environment program specialist. Facilitating the workshop was Audrey Trotman, Tuskegee University.

The Consortium's next steps are to develop a business plan and to lay out their communication strategy and organizational structure. For more information, contact Catalino Blanche, CSREES, USDA, cblanche@csrees.usda.gov, Christy Pereira, CSREES, USDA, cpereira@csrees.usda.gov, or Joshua Idassi, Tennessee State University, jjdassi@tnstate.edu.

4-H Youth Figure Heavily in GPS and Mapping Projects

The Youth Favorite Places Interactive On-Line Atlas will stimulate rural economic development. 4-H Tech Team members in 40 states are beginning to work with Extension rural tourism specialists to identify places in their own small towns and rural areas that are really fun for kids. Using digital cameras and Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers to collect images and data about favorite places in their communities, they will build interactive GIS (Geographic Information Systems) maps that families can access to plan their trips to include "youth favorite places." The benefit of happier youth travelers converts into economic benefits for participating communities through increased spending in small towns and rural areas that are now "on the map" as a 4-H youth favorite place destination.

Community mapping programs have been launched by Cooperative Extension in 40 states. Community mapping teams made up of local government officials, county agencies, local schools, and local 4-H Tech Teams have partnered to create data-based maps that will improve the decisions made at the local government level. Issues include (but are not limited to) West Nile Virus, water quality, radon gas, street and road conditions, invasive species, tracking accidents, and other human health threats. 4-H youth are providing technical assistance and software development assistance to local government efforts. Contact: Tom Tate, CSREES, USDA ttate@csrees.usda.gov and Jim Kahler, CSREES, USDA—jkahler@csrees.usda.gov.

Genomics Events, Reports, and RFA Announced

- The Cross-Legume Advances through Genomics Conference, hosted by the University of California and co-funded by CSREES, <http://catg.ucdavis.edu>, will be held December 14-15, 2004, in Santa Fe, New Mexico. It will bring together researchers from the legume community to identify an overall goal for an international cross-legume genome project, and to identify cross-cutting themes to help integrate the legume crop genom-

ics programs including, for example, a unified legume genomics database and information systems, nutritional and health-related aspects of legumes, and detailed synteny and comparative genomics of legumes.

- The report from the Wheat Translational Genomics Conference hosted by the University of California and funded by CSREES is posted at <http://maswheat.ucdavis.edu/Meetings/CAP2005/index.htm>
- On September 15, 2004, under the auspices of the National Plant Genome Initiative (NPGI), the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, and USDA released an RFA intended to support large-scale sequencing of the maize genome. The URL for the announcement is <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2004/nsf04614/nsf04614.htm>. Previous funding has supported development of maize genome sequence resources, including physical and genetic maps, Expressed Sequence Tags (ESTs), sequences derived from gene-enriched genomic libraries, Bacterial Artificial Chromosome (BAC) sequences, and a community genome database. The objective of this program announcement is to solicit applications that build on these resources to develop a comprehensive sequence resource for the maize genome that will capture the majority of the sequence information in a timely and cost-effective manner.
- The International Plant & Animal Genome XIII Conference on the Status of Plant & Animal Genome Research <http://www.intl-pag.org>, will be held January 15-19, 2005, in San Diego, California. Contact: Ed Kaleikau, CSREES, USDA—ekaleikau@csrees.usda.gov

MyMoney Launches New Website and Toll-Free Hotline

Twenty federal agencies, including USDA represented by CSREES, collaborated to launch a new national financial education Website and toll-free hotline—mymoney.gov and 1-888-mymoney—in October 2004. The new MyMoney services were developed to help the public easily access information about money—how to save it, invest it, and manage it wisely to meet personal goals. The Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (Public Law 108-159 Section 511), signed by President Bush on December 4, 2003, established the Financial Literacy and Education Commission, which developed the national financial education Website and hotline. The Commission also will develop a national strategy on financial education. Mary Gray, CSREES Families, 4-H, and Nutrition deputy administrator, represents USDA on the Commission. Jane Schuchardt, CSREES national program leader, serves on the Website Development team. The mymoney.gov Web

site is linked to the CSREES site at www.csrees.usda.gov/financialsecurity under Resources. Contact: Jane Schuchardt, CSREES, USDA—jschuchardt@csrees.usda.gov

One Solution Ramps Up for 2005

A continuing emphasis within CSREES this year is the development of a consolidated reporting system, which will enable institutions and organizations receiving CSREES support to report progress and accomplishments through a one-stop system, now being referred to as “One Solution.” 2005 is a critical year as this initiative ramps up quickly to establish requirements and begin the initial development stage for a system that will best serve the reporting and accountability needs of CSREES and its partners. Contact: Sally Rockey, CSREES, USDA—srockey@csrees.usda.gov.

NACDEP is Newest Professional Organization for Extension

The National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals is a new organization dedicated to improving the visibility, coordination, professional status, and resource base of community and economic development extension programs and professionals to ensure the relevance, quality, and performance of Community Resource and Economic Development research and programming efforts aimed at strengthening and coordinating the delivery of community and economic development programs and resources. As such, the future fiscal, political, and organizational viability of NACDEP is directly linked to its ability to enhance its visibility, and to broaden its partnerships as a programming and research area within the national Cooperative Extension System, USDA, and CSREES. The NACDEP inaugural conference is set for February 2005. Contact: Sally Maggard, CSREES, USDA—smaggard@csrees.usda.gov.

E-Grants Continue to Advance within CSREES

Electronic government is at the forefront of the CSREES management agenda and the Agency is moving ahead rapidly in the area of e-grants. CSREES served as the pilot research agency for grants.gov which, in the future, will serve as a portal through which all federal grant applications will be submitted. Lessons learned from the pilot are being applied to all research granting agencies, and, as a result, CSREES plans to make electronic submission available for the 2006 fiscal year. CSREES has also deployed its Peer Review System which is allowing electronic submission of proposal reviews. Next on the horizon is a system that will allow applicants to view the status of the currently submitted proposals. CSREES is working collaboratively with other federal agencies in developing an end-to-end grants management system that will accommodate full electronic processes—from proposal submission, to award and reporting. Contact: Sally Rockey, CSREES, USDA—srockey@csrees.usda.gov.

CEAP Studies Environment in Collaboration with ARS, NRCS

As part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP), resource economists from Iowa State, Ohio State, Pennsylvania State, and Purdue Universities are conducting several watershed-based socio-economic studies to evaluate socio-economic benefits of conservation effects. Through CEAP, USDA will study the environmental effects, such as water and air quality and wildlife habitat, of federal conservation programs on agricultural land. Resource economists at these land-grant universities are collaborating with physical and biological scientists and staff at the USDA Agricultural Research Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service to assess the socio-economic benefits resulting from producers' participation in various conservation programs. Contact: Fen Hunt, CSREES, USDA—fhunt@csrees.usda.gov.

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