

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, REGION 7
EPA-R7WWPD-04-001**

Notice of Request for Initial Proposals for Projects to be Funded From the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) Strategic Agriculture Initiative (CFDA 66.716 - Surveys, Studies, Investigations, Training Demonstrations and Educational Outreach)

Proposal due date - April 23, 2004

SUMMARY

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Water, Wetlands, and Pesticides Division (WWPD), Pesticides Programs Branch, Region 7, is requesting proposals which will help implement requirements of the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), and to support transition to using less and lower risk pesticides in food production. The program supports innovative efforts that enable growers to decrease reliance on pesticides while maintaining economical outcomes, by developing, and/or applying reduced-risk alternatives and ecologically-based integrated approaches to pest management.

1. Funding Opportunity Description

This grant program encourages “systems” approaches that integrate pest, soil and crop management practices. Although the focus is on reducing dependency on pesticides and developing alternatives to pesticides targeted under FQPA, a broader approach to problem-solving is encouraged in the development of project proposals under the FQPA Strategic Agriculture Initiative and Section 20 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) as amended.

EPA will award grants for projects involving investigations, studies, demonstrations, research and training efforts that enable growers to decrease reliance on agricultural pesticides while maintaining economical outcomes, by developing, demonstration and/or applying reduced-risk alternatives and ecologically-based integrated approaches to pest management. Proposals should incorporate one or more of the goals of the FQPA Strategic Agriculture Initiative.

The goals of the FQPA Strategic Agriculture Initiative are:

- Utilize demonstration projects, outreach and/or education to increase the adoption of integrated or sustainable agricultural production practices which provide alternatives to pesticides impacted negatively by FQPA decisions.
- Work collaboratively with producers, commodity groups and other stakeholders by making the best use of expert field consultants, USDA research, EPA’s safer substitutes, and university technical support on alternatives and integrated pest management practices.
- Actively engage scientists, farmers, industry, and local, state and federal partners in the specifics of implementing FQPA.
- Demonstrate region-specific pest management technologies and integrated crop management systems to replace pesticide uses which may be canceled under FQPA.
- Use “farmer to farmer” training and communication methods, community participation, and/or other forms of public-private cooperation.

2. Award Information

Amount of Funding Available

Approximately \$85,000 in Federal funds is available for award of projects; individual grant awards range from \$5,000 to \$50,000.

Number of Awards

The number of awards will depend on individual proposal cost; the final aggregate amount of federal funding for all proposals; and the total amount of federal funding available. *Should additional funding become available for award the Agency may award additional grants based on this solicitation and in accordance with the final selection process, without further notice or competition.*

Start Date

Within 45 days after grant award.

Performance Period

Project duration should not exceed 24 months.

3. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Grant funds are available to public and private non-profit institutions and groups, including commodity groups/associations and farmers' groups, individuals, State agencies, federally recognized Indian tribal governments and Native American Organizations, Cooperative Extension, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, and laboratories. Ineligible groups are encouraged to work with an eligible organization to submit proposals. Implementation of all projects must occur within one of the four states of EPA Region 7: Iowa, Kansas, Missouri or Nebraska.

B. Matching/Cost Share Requirements

There are no cost share requirements for these projects. However, matching funds are encouraged.

C. Other Eligibility Criteria

Preliminary Eligibility Screening Requirements

To be eligible for funding, applicants **must address or meet** all of the following criteria, failure to address or meet these criteria will result in the proposal being disqualified for funding consideration:

1. Be an applicant who is eligible to receive funding under this announcement.
2. The proposal must address one or more of the goals of the FQPA Strategic Agriculture Initiative.
3. The proposal must meet all format and content requirements contained in this notice.
4. The proposal must comply with the directions for submittal contained in this notice.
5. The EPA will consider only one proposal by an applicant.

4. Proposal and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Applicable Forms

Standard Forms 424 and 424A may be obtained from the following website; <http://www.epa.gov/region07/economics/appforms.htm> or by contacting the R7 Competition Advocate at the number/address listed in this announcement.

B. Content and Form of Proposal Submission

Proposals must be typewritten, double spaced in 12 point or larger print using 8.5 x 11 inch paper with minimum 1 inch horizontal and vertical margins. Pages must be numbered in order starting with the cover page and continuing through the appendices. **One original and one electronic copy is required.** All proposals must include:

- Completed Page 1 of Standard Form SF 424, Application for Federal Assistance, please include organization fax number and e-mail address.
- Completed Page 2 of Standard Form SF-424A, Budget Information - Section B (See Allowable Cost section below)
- Detailed itemization of the amounts budgeted by individual Object Class Categories (See Allowable Cost section below)
- Statement regarding whether this proposal is a continuation of a previously funded project (if so, please provide the assistance number and status of the current grant/cooperative agreement).

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary shall be a stand-alone document, not to exceed one page, containing the specifics of what is proposed and what you expect to accomplish regarding measuring or movement toward achieving project goals. This summary should identify the measurable environmental results you expect including potential human health and ecological benefits.

Table of Contents

A one page table listing the different parts of your proposal and the page number on which each part begins.

Proposal Narrative

Includes parts I - VI. (Parts I through VI listed below are not to exceed 10 pages).

Part I: Project Title

Self-explanatory.

Part II. Objectives

A numbered list (1, 2, etc.) of concisely written project objectives - in most cases, each objective can be stated in a single sentence.

Part III: Justification

For each objective listed in Part II above, discuss the potential outcome in terms of environmental, human health, pesticide risk and/or use reduction or pollution prevention. If appropriate the target pest(s) and crop(s) should be explicitly stated. This section should be numbered with a justification corresponding to each objective.

Part IV: Literature Review

Briefly describe relevant information currently available. This should also include information on projects currently in progress that are relevant to or provide the basis for either the experimental design or the validation of a new approach to pest management.

Part V: Approach and Methods

Describe in detail how the program will be carried out. Describe how the system or approach will support the program goals.

Part VI: Impact Assessment

Please state how you will evaluate the success of the program in terms of measurable environmental results. How and with what measures will humans or ecosystems be better protected as a result of the program.

Proposal Appendices

These appendices must be included in the grant proposal. Additional appendices are not permitted.

- Literature Cited List cited key literature references alphabetically by author.
- Timetable A timetable that includes what will be accomplished under each of the objectives during the project and when completion of each objective is anticipated.
- Major Participants This appendix should list all farmers/ranchers, farm/ranch organizations, researchers, educators, and conservationists and others having a major role in the proposal. Provide name, organizational affiliation or occupation (such as farmer) and a description of the role each will play in the project. A brief resume (not to exceed two pages) should be submitted for each major researcher or other educator.

C. Submission Dates and Times

EPA will consider all initial proposals which are post-marked by the U.S. Postal Service, hand-delivered, or electronically delivered to the Agency, or include official delivery service documentation indicating EPA acceptance from a delivery service, on or before the deadline published in the request for Initial Proposals. This due date is on or before 5 p.m. Central Time, April 23, 2004. Proposals received after the due date will not be considered for funding.

All proposals should be mailed or delivered to:

Environmental Protection Agency
Attention: Brad Horchem (WWPD/PEST)
901 North 5th Street
Kansas City, Kansas 66101

The electronic copy should be e-mailed to horchem.brad@epa.gov or submitted on a 3.5" disk, IBM compatible, readable in MS Word or Word Perfect, WP6/7/8/9 for Windows. The electronic copy should be consolidated into a single file.

- Disks will be checked for computer viruses; proposals that are submitted with viruses will be disqualified.

D. Intergovernmental Review

Applicants must comply with the Intergovernmental Review Process and/or the consultation provisions of Section 204, Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act, if applicable, which are contained in 40 CFR Part 29. Further information regarding this requirement will be provided if your proposal is selected for funding.

E. Funding Restrictions

Award will not allow for reimbursement of pre-award costs.

F. Other Submission Requirements

Allowable Costs

EPA grant funds may only be used for the purposes set forth in the grant agreement, and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Grant funds may not be used for matching funds for other Federal grants, lobbying, or intervention in Federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. In addition, Federal funds may not be used to sue the Federal government or any other government entity. All costs identified in the budget must conform to applicable Federal Cost Principles contained in OMB Circular A-87; A-122; and A-21, as appropriate. Ineligible costs will be reduced from final grant award.

Confidential Business Information

Applicants should clearly mark information contained in their proposal which they consider confidential business information. EPA reserves the right to make final confidentiality decisions in accordance with Agency regulations at 40 CFR Part 2, Subpart B. If no such claim accompanies the proposal when it is received by the EPA, it may be made available to the public by EPA without further notice to the applicant.

Pre-Application Assistance

None planned.

Statutory Authority and Applicable Regulations

Food Quality Protection Act Strategic Agriculture Initiative grants are awarded under the authority of Section 20 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide (FIFRA) Act as amended by the Food Quality Protection Act.

5. Proposal Review Information

All responsive proposals, those that meet all eligibility criteria listed in the Preliminary Eligibility Screening Requirements section, will be reviewed, evaluated and ranked by a selected panel of EPA reviewers based on the following evaluation criteria.

A. Criteria

All proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria and weights:

1. Qualification and experience of the applicant relative to the proposed project activity. (13 pts)
2. Project proposal is consistent with the goals of FQPA Strategic Agriculture Initiative. (28 pts)
3. Provisions for measuring and documenting the project's results quantitatively and qualitatively. (24 pts)
4. Likelihood that the project can be replicated in other areas by other organizations to benefit other communities. (25 pts).
5. Project uses a whole farm ecological systems approach which integrates pest, soil and crop management practices. (10 pts)

B. Review and Selection Process

All eligible proposals will be reviewed, evaluated and ranked by a selected panel of EPA reviewers based on the above evaluation criteria. Applicants will be screened to ensure that they meet all eligibility criteria and will be disqualified if they do not meet the criteria. Final selection will be made by the Region 7 Director of the Water, Wetlands, and Pesticide Division.

C. Anticipated Announcement and Award Date

The Agency anticipates announcing the successful proposal(s) within 45 days after the closing date of this announcement. Project award is anticipated no later than 90 days after receipt of a complete application package.

The Agency reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards.

6. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

After the deadline for proposals has passed, the Region 7 EPA office will send acknowledgments to applicants. Once proposals have been reviewed, evaluated and ranked, applicants will be notified regarding the success of their proposal.

A listing of the successful proposal(s) will be posted on the Region 7 EPA website address, http://www.epa.gov/region07/economics/r7_grant_opportunities.htm at the conclusion of the competition. This website may also contain additional information about this announcement including information concerning deadline extensions or other modifications.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The applicant(s) whose proposal is/are selected for federal funding must complete additional forms prior to award (see 40 CFR 31.12). After submittal of the application package, the applicant will receive by mail, a notice of award, signed by the EPA Region 7 Grants Management Officer authorizing the project. EPA reserves the right to negotiate and/or adjust the final grant amount and work plan content prior to award. In addition, the successful applicant will be required to certify that they have not been debarred or suspended from participation in federal assistance awards in accordance with 40 CFR part 32.

C. Reporting

The successful applicant(s) will be required to submit, either electronically or by paper, performance reports every six months in accordance with 40 CFR 31.40 and a final report in accordance with 40 CFR 31.41.

7. Agency Contacts

Brad Horchem
Region 7 Project Officer
913.551.7137, Telephone
913.551.7165, Fax
horchem.brad@epa.gov

Kathy Finazzo
Region 7 Competition Advocate
913.551.7833, Telephone
913.551-9833, Fax
finazzo.kathy@epa.gov