

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Cooperative State Research,
Education, and Extension Service****Risk Management Agency****Federal Crop Insurance Corporation****Request for Proposals**

AGENCIES: Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), Risk Management Agency (RMA), and Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC), USDA.

ACTION: Announcement of availability of grant funds and request for proposals for Agricultural Risk Management Education.

SUMMARY: CSREES and RMA, administering this program for FCIC, in consultation with the Risk Management Education Steering Committee, is soliciting proposals for a Risk Management Education Program under section 516 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act and under a delegation of authority memorandum from the FCIC to the Administrator of CSREES. Projects are solicited in the following areas: 1. The delivery of risk management education programs to producers and related agribusiness operators in the U.S. agricultural sector (program delivery); 2. The development of agricultural risk management educational curricula and materials (curriculum and materials); and 3. Supporting research that leads to improved risk management strategies and decision aids for agricultural producers or that improves access to risk management information (supportive research).

This notice sets out the objectives for these projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, the application procedures and instructions, and the project selection process and evaluation criteria. To obtain application forms, contact the CSREES Proposal Services Unit, Office of Extramural Programs, USDA/CSREES at (202) 401-5048; e-mail: psb@reeusda.gov. When contacting the Proposal Services Unit, please indicate that you are requesting forms for the Risk Management Education Program.

DATES: Applications must be received on or before April 13, 1998. Proposals received after April 13, 1998 will not be considered for funding.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Craig Witt, Risk Management Agency, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Stop 0805, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-0805; Voice: (202) 690-2957; Fax: (202) 690-2095;

Internet: cwitt@wdc.fas.usda.gov; or Donald A. West, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Stop 2212, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-2212; Voice: (202) 720-5633; Fax: (202) 690-2522; Internet: dwest@reeusda.gov.

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Part I—General Information**A. Legislative Authority**

Sections 506(l) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act, 7 U.S.C. 1506, provides FCIC with the authority to carry out programs intended to provide education in the management of risks inherent in the production of agricultural commodities. Consequently, FCIC is providing assistance to stimulate programs which help agricultural producers understand the effective use of insurance protection programs and other related risk management tools which lead to their improved financial stability.

FCIC funds this competitive grants program under its authority in section 516 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act, 7 U.S.C. 1516, to fund research and development of risk management programs for insurance protection and related issues. FCIC and CSREES have entered into an interagency agreement under the Economy act, 31 U.S.C. 1535,

and FCIC has delegated the necessary authority for CSREES to administer this program for FCIC.

B. Definitions

For the purpose of making awards under 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 of Agriculture to whom the authority involved may be delegated.

Agricultural Risk Management means the informed use of tools and strategies by farmers, ranchers, and agribusiness firms to deal with the risks encountered when producing and marketing agricultural products. The insurance protection programs area, including those related risks encountered in the production, marketing, financial, legal, and human resource(s) aspects of agricultural operations, is the primary thrust of this RFP.

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 Organizational Representative means the official designated by the president or chief executive officers 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.

Department or USDA means the United States Department of Agriculture.

Grant means the award by the Administrator of CSREES or his designee of funds to an eligible entity whose proposal has been selected under this RFP.

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

Insurance (Risk) Protection Programs mean programs relating to crop insurance and agriculture-related risks and losses.

Manager means the Manager of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC).

Peer Review Panel means a group of experts qualified by training and experience in particular fields designated by the Risk Management Education Steering Committee to evaluate eligible proposals in those fields submitted under this RFP.

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

Producers and Related Agribusiness Operators mean individuals, companies, or corporations engaged in the business of agriculture or in the business of supplying agriculture with products or services.

Project Director means the person designated by the grantee in the grant application and approved by the Secretary who is responsible for the direction and management of the project.

Project means the insurance protection program or related risk management education activity for which a grant has been requested.

Project period means the specific dates, as stated in the award document and modifications thereto, if any, during which Federal sponsorship begins and ends.

Public and private sector delivery points mean the direct contacts between a person delivering the RME program and the producer (e.g., a lender or insurance agent discussing risk management with a producer).

RME Steering Committee means the Risk Management Education Steering Committee, consisting of representatives from RMA, CSREES, and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, formed by these agencies in an April 1997 Memorandum of Understanding.

Request for Proposals (RFP) means an invitation to submit projects for consideration for funding under this program.

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

C. Eligibility

Except where otherwise prohibited by law, proposals are invited from all colleges and universities, other research institutions, Federal, State, and local agencies, nonprofit and for-profit private organizations or corporations, and individuals, with strong encouragement to minority organizations, which have a demonstrated capability to conduct risk management education delivery, curricula development or supportive research programs. Projects which represent, involve, or foster partnerships between two or more eligible entities are encouraged.

To compete for a grant, an entity must submit a completed application before the announced deadline. To be eligible, an entity must have: (a) The capacity

and professional expertise to deliver educational programs, prepare curricula and materials, or conduct research in agricultural risk management; (b) adequate knowledge of insurance protection programs and related areas in agricultural production, marketing, financial, legal and human resource practices; (c) competency to implement a project, provide fiscal accountability and oversight, and prepare status reports and project documentation; and (d) a demonstrated willingness to share information with researchers, educators, and the public.

Although an applicant may be eligible to compete for an award based on its status as an eligible entity, other factors may exclude an applicant from receiving Federal assistance under this program (e.g., debarment and suspension, a determination of non-responsibility based on the information submitted).

Part II—Program Description

A. Purpose of the Program

Recent events have placed greater responsibility on U.S. producers to manage the risks of their operations. Recent changes brought about by the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-127, increased global competition and price variation, changes in the structure of some agricultural segments, and the adoption of new technologies have all contributed to a more risky environment for U.S. farmers and ranchers. The need to manage risks in this new environment is so compelling that it has prompted new efforts targeting increased risk management education.

Many farm and ranch operators do not have the training to develop effective risk management strategies involving insurance protection and related techniques for their businesses. Moreover, the risks in production, marketing, finance, legal, and human resources are increasingly interconnected. Consequently, these risks demand comprehensive strategies for their management. In seeking profit opportunities in the new risk environment, producers and the agricultural community can benefit from increased risk management education, increased access to risk management information, and new decision aids.

Proposals are requested for the purpose of stimulating the research and development of education in the risks covered by insurance protection programs, including the related areas of production, marketing, finance, legal, and human resource(s). Specifically, these programs should recognize the

relationships between risk areas. They should also be part of a substantial effort to reach all segments of U.S. agricultural producers by increasing their awareness of both traditional and new risk management tools.

Proposals are invited for competitive awards under the Risk Management Education Program for fiscal year (FY) 1998. The purpose of these awards is to provide U.S. agricultural producers with the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to make better-informed risk management decisions. Projects should incorporate one or more of the following areas: (1) Deliver risk management training to U.S. farmers, ranchers, and related agribusinesses; (2) develop and distribute risk management educational curricula and materials; and (3) support research that leads to improved risk management strategies, information, or decision aids for producers. This grants program is funded by the FCIC and administered by CSREES.

B. Available Funds and Award Limitations

For FY 1998, approximately \$3 million is available for risk management education and supportive research projects. The total of all awards will not exceed \$3 million for FY 1998. Proposals will be awarded on a fiscal year basis with a one-year duration for projects focused on educational program delivery and curricula development and up to two years for those focused on supportive research.

Federal funding for each successful proposal will not exceed \$250,000. Proposed budgets are subject to negotiation, but the Federal share will not exceed \$250,000.

C. Indirect Costs

If requested, indirect costs must be justified and may not exceed the current rate negotiated with the cognizant Federal negotiating agency. If no rate has been negotiated, a reasonable dollar amount in lieu of indirect costs may be requested, which will be subject to approval by USDA. Due to the nature of the projects to be funded under this program, applicants are encouraged to request rates that are lower than an applicant's approved negotiated research or instructional rate. Applications from colleges and universities that are not submitted through an Office of Sponsored Programs (or equivalent thereto) must provide a statement in the budget narrative verifying that the indirect costs requested are in accordance with institutional policies.

D. Scope of Program

Risk management education projects funded by this RFP are intended to reach either U.S. agricultural producers directly or agribusinesses that interact with U.S. producers. These projects must be directed to (a) Program delivery; (b) the development of curriculum and materials; and/or (c) supportive research and decision aids. Projects which address more than one of these areas are encouraged. Also encouraged are projects which form or foster private and public partnerships, and are innovative. All projects must contain explicit information indicating how results from the project will be measured, evaluated, and reported. The indicators used to measure results of the project should be clear and objective and focus on the anticipated impacts of risk management education or resulting behavior of U.S. agricultural producers, to the extent possible.

E. Program Delivery

Program delivery is providing instruction and materials directly to farmers and ranchers or training third party educators who have the opportunity and ability to reach farmers and ranchers with risk management education. A successful proposal in this area will include the use of strong organizational skills to reach the farmers and ranchers in a specific region or who use similar production practices. Proposals should show how public or private sector (or both) delivery points will be used to reach producers. Moreover, proposals should be mindful of the private sector's competitive motivations and the potential conflicts of interest in providing risk management education. Proposals which use innovative educational techniques to deliver risk management education are encouraged.

F. Curriculum and Materials

Educational curricula and materials are printed, electronically based, or multi-media items which can be used in program delivery. Proposals should offer materials which address important risk management topics, are easy to use, and effectively communicate the risk management message. Projects should produce teaching devices which can be readily understood and easily adopted by program deliverers. Those proposals which address topics and issues not covered in the body of existing risk management education materials are encouraged. Also encouraged are proposals which deal with the linkages

among different kinds of risk and their management.

G. Supportive Research

Supportive research is adaptive or applied research which results in improved educational programming, practical tools, techniques, strategies, or decision aids. Applied research on the unmet risk management needs of crop and livestock producers is encouraged. Producers should be able to use these results in making better risk management decisions. Proposals should also focus on producing results which will be readily understood by producers or by trainers when used in program delivery. Proposals which include innovative approaches are encouraged.

Part III—Preparation of a Proposal

A. Program Application Materials

Program application materials will be made available to eligible entities upon request. These materials include information on the purpose of the program, how the program will be conducted, the required contents of a proposal, and the forms needed to prepare and submit grant applications.

To obtain application forms, please contact the Proposal Services Unit; Office of Extramural Programs; USDA/CSREES at (202) 401-5048. When calling Proposal Services please indicate that you are requesting forms for the Risk Management Education Program. Application materials also may be requested via Internet by sending a message with your name, mailing address (not e-mail) and telephone number to psb@reusda.gov. The request should indicate that you wish to receive a copy of the application materials for the FY 1998 Risk Management Education Program. Materials will then be mailed to you (not e-mailed).

B. Content of a Proposal

After you have received the application materials, you can complete your application as follows:

1. Cover Page

Complete the "Application for Funding" Form in its entirety.

a. Note that providing a Social Security Number is voluntary, but is an integral part of the CSREES information system and will assist in the processing of the proposal.

b. One copy of the "Application for Funding" form must contain the pen-and-ink signatures of the project director and authorized organizational representative for the applicant organization.

c. Note that by signing the "Application for Funding" form the applicant is providing the required certifications set forth in 7 CFR Part 3017, as amended, regarding Debarment and Suspension and Drug-Free Workplace, and 7 CFR Part 3018, regarding Lobbying. The certification forms are included in this application package for informational purposes only. It is not necessary to submit the forms to USDA.

2. Table of Contents

For ease in locating information, each proposal must contain a detailed table of contents immediately after the proposal cover page. The Table of Contents should include page numbers for each component of the proposal. Pagination should begin immediately following the Table of Contents.

3. Project Summary

The proposal must contain a concise project summary on a separate page. This page must include the title of the project and the names of the project director and the applicant organization, followed by a project summary of 250 words or less. The project summary should describe the overall goals and relevance of the project. It should also contain a listing of all organizations involved in the project. The Project Summary should immediately follow the Table of Contents.

4. Project Narrative

The Project Narrative must be prepared on only one side of each page using standard size (8½" x 11"; 21.6 cm x 27.9 cm) white paper, one-inch margins, typed or word processed using no type smaller than 10 point font regardless of whether it is single or double-spaced. The project narrative shall not exceed 10 pages. It must state and then answer each of the following six questions:

(a) What risk management education activity or supportive research project is being proposed? Explain the type of project, the direct or ultimate beneficiaries of the project, and which areas of risk will be covered. The project must be directed to either program delivery, the development of curricula and materials, or supportive research. More than one of these three activities can be included in one project. Identify and describe the insurance protection and related areas of risk (production, marketing, financial, legal, or human resources) which will be included in the project. Describe the methodology to be used, the procedures to be followed, and the time line for their completion. Include a description of any innovative

techniques used in the project to advance risk management education.

(b) At what audience(s) is the project directed? Provide a description of the U.S. agricultural production sector(s) for which the project is intended. Describe the geographical area, demographic profile, and perceived risk management needs of the proposed beneficiaries of the project. Indicate reasons why these risk management education needs are not being met with existing programs.

(c) What are the goals of the project? Describe the goals of the project and the procedures to be followed in meeting them. Indicate how the project will make a positive measurable impact on producer's knowledge of agricultural risks and their ability to cope with these risks. Indicate, also, how the impact of the project will be measured and how results will be reported. Ensure that indicators used to measure the results of the project are relevant and as objective as possible.

(d) What partnering opportunities will be created through the project? Identify the private and public organizations that will participate in the project. Identify any additional organizations which may become involved or have a positive influence on risk management education as a result of the project.

(e) How can the project become self-sustaining? For program delivery proposals, or components of proposals, indicate how the project can become self-sustaining in the absence of further outside funding. Specify mechanisms such as user fees or product sales that could be used.

(f) How does the project assist in the effort to provide simple and practical risk management tools to producers? Describe the ways in which the project activities will communicate clearly and simply with producers. Indicate the ways in which this project will result in the producers receiving practical, user-friendly materials or tools for risk management.

5. Key Personnel

Identify the primary project director, the co-project manager(s), and other key personnel committed to this project. Summarize the relevant experience of key project personnel that will enable them to successfully complete the project. Include brief vitae which provide enough information so that proposal reviewers can make an informed judgment as to their capabilities and experience. An organizational chart for the project should be provided if available.

6. Budget

Budget Form: Prepare the budget form in accordance with instructions provided with the form. Projects selected for program delivery or curricula and materials will be funded for up to one year. Projects selected for supportive research will be funded for up to two years. A budget form is required for each year of requested support. In addition, a summary budget is required detailing the requested total support for the overall project period, if more than one year. The budget form may be reproduced as needed by applicants. Funds may be requested under any of the categories listed on the form, provided that the item or service for which support is requested is allowable under authorizing legislation, applicable Federal cost principles, these program guidelines, and can be justified as necessary for the successful conduct of the proposed project. Requested expenditures for equipment should not represent more than 10 percent of the budget total.

7. Current and Pending Support

All proposals must list any other current public or private support (including in-house support) to which key personnel identified in the proposal have committed portions of their time, whether or not salary support for person(s) involved is included in the budget. Analogous information must be provided for any pending proposals that are being considered by, or that will be submitted in the near future to, other possible sponsors, including other USDA programs or agencies. Concurrent submission of identical or similar proposals to other possible sponsors will not prejudice proposal review or evaluation for this purpose. However, a proposal that duplicates or overlaps substantially with a proposal already reviewed and funded (or that will be funded) by another organization or agency will not be funded under this program. The application material includes Form CSREES-663 which is suitable for listing current and pending support.

8. Compliance With the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Environmental data for any proposed project is to be provided to CSREES so that CSREES may determine whether any further action is needed. In some cases, however, the preparation of environmental data may not be required. Certain categories of actions are excluded from the requirements of NEPA.

In order for CSREES to determine whether any further action is needed with respect to NEPA, pertinent information regarding the possible environmental impacts of a particular project is necessary; therefore, Form CSREES-1234, "NEPA Exclusions Form," must be included in the proposal indicating whether the applicant is of the opinion that the project falls within a categorical exclusion and the reasons therefor. If it is the applicant's opinion that the proposed project falls within the categorical exclusions, the specific exclusion must be identified. Form CSREES-1234 and supporting documentation should be placed after the Form CSREES-661, "Application for Funding," in the proposal.

Even though a project may fall within the categorical exclusions, CSREES may determine that an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement is necessary for an activity, if substantial controversy on environmental grounds exists or if other extraordinary conditions or circumstances are present which may cause such activity to have a significant environmental effect.

Part IV—Submission of a Proposal

A. What to Submit

An original and 14 copies of each proposal must be submitted. Each copy must be stapled in the upper left-hand corner (DO NOT BIND). All copies of a proposal must be submitted in one package.

B. Where and When to Submit

Proposals must be received by close of business on April 13, 1998. A proposal's postmark date is not a factor in whether an application is timely received. The applicant assumes the risk of any unforeseen delays in proposal delivery. Proposals sent by First Class mail must be sent to the following address: Risk Management Education Program, c/o Proposal Services Unit, Office of Extramural Programs, USDA/CSREES, Stop 2245, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-2245; Telephone: (202) 401-5048.

Note: Hand-delivered proposals or those delivered by overnight express service should be brought to the following address: Risk Management Education Program, c/o Proposal Services Unit; Office of Extramural Programs; USDA/CSREES; Room 303, Aerospace Center; 901 D Street, S.W.; Washington, DC 20024. The telephone number is (202) 401-5048.

C. Acknowledgment of Proposals

The receipt of all proposals will be acknowledged in writing and this

acknowledgment will contain an identifying proposal number. Once a proposal has been assigned an identification number, the number should be referred to in future correspondence.

Part V—Selection Process and Evaluation Criteria

A. Selection Process

Each proposal will be evaluated in a three-part process. First, each proposal will be screened by CSREES to ensure it meets the requirements as set forth in this solicitation. Second, proposals that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by an expert peer review panel(s) selected by and using procedures approved by the RME Steering Committee. Evaluation criteria are set forth below. Each proposal will be judged on its own merit. Third, after the peer review panel(s) submits its recommendations to the RME Steering Committee, the Administrator of CSREES or his designee will make the final award decisions in consultation with the RME Steering Committee.

B. Evaluation Criteria

The peer review panel(s) will evaluate all proposals using the following criteria:

1. Program Need 20 Points

How well does the proposal identify an existing risk management education need for insurance protection or a related area that can be filled by the project? How pressing is the need identified in the project? Does the project address topics, issues, or needs of producer groups not covered in existing risk management educational programs?

2. Professional Expertise: 20 Points

Which skills, talents, and professional experiences do the applicants bring to the project? What does the track record of the applicants indicate about the likely delivery and quality of the project results?

3. Partnering: 10 Points

To what extent does the project involve organizations or groups with the capacity to conduct risk management education or supportive research? How will this partnering enhance the effort to educate agricultural producers?

4. Feasibility: 10 Points

How realistic are the project's stated goals and objectives? What is the probability that the project will reach its objectives, given the skills and prior performance of the applicant?

5. Simplicity and Practicality: 10 Points

How well does the proposal recognize the need for simplicity and practicality in risk management education for U.S. farmers and ranchers? How well will farmers and ranchers be able to understand and use the results of the project?

6. Measurability of Results: 10 Points

Are the goals and objectives of the project well-defined? Have provisions been made to measure the impact of the project? How objective and reliable are the proposed measurements and what provisions are made for reporting results on a timely basis?

7. Innovation: 10 Points

Does the proposal offer innovative approaches, procedures or solutions to the problems addressed? For example, how well does the project use new technology to accomplish its objectives? Does the project address linkages among various sources of risk and management strategies to deal with them?

8. Sustainability: 10 Points

For projects focused on program delivery, how long will the positive effects of the project likely continue? Are mechanisms set in motion by this project that assure that the delivery activity will continue in the absence of outside funding?

Part VI—Supplementary Information

A. Access to Peer Review Information

After final decisions have been announced, CSREES will, upon request, inform the project director of the basis for its decision on a proposal. Copies of summary reviews, not including the identity of the reviewers, will be made available to respective project directors.

B. Grant Awards

1. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of CSREES shall make grants to eligible applicants whose proposals are judged most meritorious under the technical evaluation criteria and procedures set forth in this request for proposals. The date specified by the Administrator 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 practicable so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted

and administered by CSREES under this request for proposals shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's assistance regulations (parts 3015, 3016, and 3019 of 7 CFR, as amended).

2. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one-time basis prior to the award of a grant identified under this program if such information has not been provided previously under this or another program for which the sponsoring agencies are responsible. Copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling the requirements contained in this section will be provided by USDA as part of the pre-award process.

3. Grant Award Document and Notice of Grant Award

The grant award document shall include at a minimum the following:

- a. Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the Administrator has awarded a grant under the terms of this request for proposals;
- b. Title of Project;
- c. Name(s) and address(es) of project director(s) chosen to direct and control approved activities;
- d. Identifying grant number assigned by the Department;
- e. Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
- f. Total amount of Department financial assistance approved by the Administrator during the project period;
- g. Legal authority(ies) under which the grant is awarded;
- h. Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the grant award; and
- i. Other information or provisions deemed necessary by CSREES to carry out their respective granting activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular grant.

4. Notice of Grant Award

The notice of grant award, in the form of a letter, will be prepared and will provide pertinent instructions or information to the grantee that is not included in the grant award document.

5. CSREES will award standard grants to carry out this program. A standard grant is a funding mechanism whereby

CSREES agrees to support a specified level of effort for a predetermined time period without additional support at a future date.

C. Use of Funds; Changes

1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility

The grantee may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of grant funds.

2. Changes in Project Plans

a. The permissible changes by the grantee, project director(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project grant shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the grantee and/or the project director(s) are uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the CSREES Authorized Departmental Officer for a final determination.

b. Changes in approved goals, or objectives, shall be requested by the grantee and approved in writing by the CSREES Authorized Departmental Officer 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 grantee and approved in writing by the awarding official of CSREES 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 grantee and approved in writing by the Department prior to effecting such transfers.

e. Changes in Project Period: The project period may be extended by CSREES without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) as the Authorized Departmental Officer determines may be necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project. Any extension of time shall be conditioned upon prior request by the grantee and approval in writing by the Authorized Departmental Officer, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of a grant.

f. Changes in Approved Budget: Changes in an approved budget must be requested by the grantee and approved in writing by the authorized

departmental officer prior to instituting such changes if the revision will:

(1) Involve transfers of amounts budgeted for indirect costs to absorb an increase in direct costs;

(2) Involve transfers of amounts budgeted for direct costs to accommodate changes in indirect cost rates negotiated during a budget period and not approved when a grant was awarded; or

(3) Involve transfers or expenditures of amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or in the grant award.

D. Other Federal Statutes and Regulations that Apply

Several other Federal statutes and regulations apply to grant proposals considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These include but are not limited to: 7 CFR Part 1.1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3, as amended—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 3015, as amended—USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, implementing OMB directives (i.e., Circular Nos. A-21, and A-122) and incorporating provisions of 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308 (formerly the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Pub. L. 95-224), as well as general policy requirements applicable to recipients of Departmental financial assistance.

7 CFR Part 3016, as amended—Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments.

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

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

7 CFR Part 3019, as amended—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 (62 FR 45947, August 29, 1997)—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133 regarding audits of States, local governments, and nonprofit organizations.

48 CFR Part 31, as amended—Contract Cost Principles and Procedures of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

29 U.S.C. 794, section 504 of the 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).

E. Confidential Aspects of Proposals and Awards

When a proposal results in a grant, it becomes a part of the record of the Agency's transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a privileged nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as privileged should be clearly marked as such and sent in a separate statement, two copies of which should accompany the proposal. The original copy of a proposal that does not result in a grant will be retained by the Agency for a period of one year. Other copies will be destroyed. Proposals that do not receive a grant will be released to others only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. If such a request is made, the applicant will be consulted prior to release of the proposal. A proposal may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final selection action thereon.

F. Evaluation of Program

All grantees shall be expected to assist USDA by providing relevant information on their respective projects. Applicants also are encouraged to plan for their own internal self-assessments and evaluations to measure the effectiveness of each project.

G. Regulatory Information

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule-related Notice to 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29115, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials.

Done at Washington, D.C., this 5th day of
February 1998.

B. H. Robinson,

*Administrator, Cooperative State Research,
Education, and Extension Service.*

Robert J. Prchal,

*Deputy Administrator for Insurance Services,
Risk Management Agency.*

Robert J. Prchal,

*Acting Manager, Federal Crop Insurance
Corporation.*

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