Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Doc. No. FV–03–376]

Fruit and Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The purpose of this notice is to notify all interested parties that the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will hold a Fruit and Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee (Committee) meeting that is open to the public. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) established the Committee to examine the full spectrum of issues faced by the fruit and vegetable industry and provide suggestions and ideas to the Secretary of Agriculture on how USDA can tailor its programs to meet the fruit and vegetable industry's needs. This notice sets forth the schedule and location for the meeting.

DATES: The Committee meeting, which is open to the public, will be held on Tuesday, April 1, 2003, from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The Committee meeting will be held at the Sheraton Reston Hotel, 11810 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, Virginia 20191.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert C. Keeney, Deputy Administrator, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Room 2077-S, Stop 0235, Washington, DC 20250–0235. Telephone: (202) 720–4722. Facsimile: (202) 720–0016. E-mail: *robert.keeney@usda.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) (5 U.S.C. App.), the Secretary of Agriculture established the Committee to examine the full spectrum of issues faced by the fruit and vegetable industry and to provide suggestions and ideas to the Secretary on how USDA can tailor its programs to meet the fruit and vegetable industry's needs.

The Chairperson of the Committee is Maureen Marshall and Vice-Chairperson is Karen Caplan. AMS Deputy Administrator for Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Robert C. Keeney, serves as the Committee's Executive Secretary and Andrew Hatch as the Designated Federal Official. Representatives from USDA mission areas and other government agencies affecting the fruit and vegetable industry will be called upon to participate in the Committee's meetings as determined by the Committee Chairperson. AMS is giving notice of the committee meeting to the public so that they may wish to attend and present their recommendations. The meeting is scheduled from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Tuesday, April 1, 2003, at the Sheraton Reston Hotel, 11810 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, Virginia 20191.

Topics to be discussed at the meeting will include: USDA programs that encourage increased consumption of fruits and vegetables; a pilot project to increase purchases of fresh produce for domestic feeding programs; labor issues; and the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP) Audit Program.

Those parties that wish to speak at the meeting should register on or before March 30, 2003. To register as a speaker or attend as an observer, please e-mail *andrew.hatch@usda.gov* or facsimile to (202) 720–0016. Registrants should include their name, address, and daytime telephone number. Depending on the number of registered speakers, time limits may be imposed on speakers. Speakers who have registered in advance will be given priority.

If you require special accommodations, such as a sign language interpreter, please contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT.** The meeting will be recorded, and information about obtaining a transcript will be provided at the meeting.

The Secretary of Agriculture has selected a diverse group of members representing a broad spectrum of persons interested in providing suggestions and ideas on how USDA can tailor its programs to meet the fruit and vegetable industry's needs. Equal opportunity practices were considered in all appointments to the Committee in accordance with USDA policies.

Dated: March 11, 2003.

A.J. Yates,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 03–6387 Filed 3–17–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–02–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Institute of Standards and Technology

[Docket No.: 030123018–3018–01]

RIN 0693–ZA51

Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program; Availability of Funds

AGENCY: National Institute of Standards and Technology, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The National Institute of Standards and Technology invites proposals from qualified organizations for funding projects that provide manufacturing extension services to small- and medium-sized manufacturers in the United States. These projects will establish Manufacturing Technology Centers under the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Program.

Proposals are invited for the expansion of manufacturing extension service capacity within three discrete geographic areas in the United States. The first area encompasses the entirety of the state of Florida. The second area encompasses the entirety of the state of Hawaii. The third area encompasses the entirety of the state of South Dakota. All organizations meeting the eligibility requirements provided herein are invited to submit proposals. As these states had previous MEP centers, applicants are required to provide 66 ⅔% or more of the operating costs for providing these manufacturing extension services.

DATES: Proposals must be received no later than 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on May 19, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Applicants must submit one signed original and two (2) copies of their proposal along with a Standard Form 424, 424–A, and 424–B (Rev 7/97), Form CD–511 (Rev 7/91), and Form CD–346 to the National Institute of Standards and Technology,

Manufacturing Extension Partnership, 100 Bureau Drive, Stop 4800, Building 301, Room C100, Gaithersburg, MD 20899–4800. Plainly mark on the outside of the package that it contains a manufacturing extension center proposal.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information regarding this announcement, contact Diane Henderson of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership by calling (301) 975–5020; or by mailing information requests to the National Institute of Standards and Technology, Manufacturing Extension Partnership, 100 Bureau Drive, Stop 4800, Building 301, Room C100, Gaithersburg, MD 20899–4800. Information packets, which include background materials on MEP, existing centers and the necessary application forms, should be requested via a one page fax sent to (301) 963–6556. Please include name, organization, mailing address, telephone number, and fax number on this request. Information is also available on-line at *http://www.mep.nist.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority: 15 U.S.C. 278k, as implemented in 15 CFR part 290.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Name and Number

The catalog number for the award of Manufacturing Technology Centers funds in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance is 11.611.

Program Description and Objectives

NIST will provide assistance for the creation and support of manufacturing extension centers. The objective of these centers is to enhance productivity, technological performance, and strengthen the global competitiveness of small- and medium-sized U.S.-based manufacturing firms.

These manufacturing extension centers will become part of the MEP national system of extension service providers. Currently, the MEP national system consists of over 400 centers and field offices located throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. Information regarding MEP and these centers is provided in the information packet that can be obtained as explained above or on-line at *http://www.mep.nist.gov.*

The objective of the projects funded under this program is to provide manufacturing extension services to small- and medium-sized manufacturers in the United States. These services are provided through the coordinated efforts of a regionally-based manufacturing extension center and local technology resources. The management and operational structure of the manufacturing extension center is not prescribed, but should be based upon the characteristics of the manufacturers in the region and locally available resources. The center should include plans for integration into the MEP national system and linkages to appropriate national resources.

The focus of the center is to provide those manufacturing extension services required by the small- and medium-sized manufacturers in its service region using the most cost effective sources for those services. It is not the intent of this program that centers perform research and development.

Funding Availability

It is anticipated that approximately $4 million will be available to support manufacturing extension centers under this announcement. The funding level for individual awards is not prescribed. The funding requested by the applicant should be directly related to the level of activity of the center, which is a function of the number of manufacturers in the designated service region, and to the availability of applicant-provided cash and in-kind contributions to be used as cost share.

Matching Requirements

A cost sharing contribution from the applicant is required. The applicant must provide 66⅔ % or more of the total capital, operating and maintenance costs for the center, as all of these states have had previously existing MEP centers. The applicant's share of the center expenses may include cash and in-kind contributions. However, at least 50% of the applicant's total cost share (cash plus in-kind) must be in cash. The source of the cost share, both cash and in-kind, must be documented in the budget submitted in the proposal.

Funding Instrument

The formal agreement between NIST and a successful applicant will be in the form of a cooperative agreement. Under this agreement, the NIST MEP will have substantial interactions with the applicant in planning and executing this project. This will include the following:

—Assisting in developing required plans.
—Providing access to standard manufacturing extension and related tools.
—Facilitating partnering with appropriate organizations both within and outside of the MEP national system.
—Defining measures for evaluation of performance.
—Direct involvement in helping to understand, define, and resolve problems in the center's operations.

Eligibility Criteria

Manufacturing extension centers must be affiliated with a U.S.-based not-for-profit institution or organization. MEP interprets not-for-profit organizations to include universities and state and local governments. Eligible applicants may be consortia of non-profit institutions. Existing MEP manufacturing extension centers are eligible.

Award Period

The projects awarded under this program will have a budget and performance period of one year. These projects may be renewable on an annual basis subject to the review requirements described in 15 CFR 290.8. Renewal of these projects shall be at the sole discretion of NIST and shall be based upon satisfactory performance, priority of the need for the service, existing legislative authority, and availability of funds.

Evaluation Criteria

All qualified proposals will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the following criteria by an impartial review panel. Each proposal should address all four evaluation criteria, which are assigned equal weighting.

(1) *Identification of Target Firms in Proposed Region.* Does the proposal define an appropriate service region with a large enough population of target firms of small- and medium-sized manufacturers that the applicant understands and can serve, and which is not presently served by an existing center?

(i) *Market Analysis.* Demonstrated understanding of the service region's manufacturing base, including business size, industry types, product mix, and technology requirements.

(ii) *Geographical Location.* Physical size, concentration of industry, and economic significance of the service region's manufacturing base. Geographical diversity of the centers will be a factor in evaluation of proposals; a proposal for a center located near an existing center may be considered only if the proposal is unusually strong and the population of manufacturers and the technology to be addressed justify it.

(2) *Technology Resources.* Does the proposal assure strength in technical personnel and programmatic resources, full-time staff, facilities, equipment, and linkages to external sources of

technology to develop and transfer technologies related to NIST research results and expertise in the technical areas noted in the MEP regulations found at 15 CFR part 290?

(3) *Technology Delivery Mechanisms.* Does the proposal clearly and sharply define an effective methodology for delivering advanced manufacturing technology to small- and medium-sized manufacturers?

(i) *Linkages.* Development of effective partnerships or linkages to third parties such as industry, universities, nonprofit economic organizations, and state governments who will amplify the center's technology delivery to reach a large number of clients in its service region.

(ii) *Program Leverage.* Provision of an effective strategy to amplify the center's technology delivery approaches to achieve the proposed objectives as described in 15 CFR 290.3(e).

(4) *Management and Financial Plan.* Does the proposal define a management structure and assure management personnel to carry out development and operation of an effective center?

(i) *Organizational Structure.* Completeness and appropriateness of the organizational structure, and its focus on the mission of the center. Assurance of full-time top management of the center.

(ii) *Program Management.* Effectiveness of the planned methodology of program management.

(iii) *Internal Evaluation.* Effectiveness of the planned continuous internal evaluation of program activities.

(iv) *Plans for Financial Matching.* Demonstrated stability and duration of the applicants funding commitments as well as the percentage of operating and capital costs guaranteed by the applicant. Identification of matching fund sources and the general terms of the funding commitments.

(v) *Budget.* Suitability and focus of the applicant's detailed one-year budget and budget outline for years 2–5 and beyond.

Proposal Selection Process

Proposal evaluation and selection will consist of four principal phases: proposal qualification, proposal review, site visits and award determination.

a. Proposal Qualification

All proposals will be reviewed by NIST to assure compliance with the proposal content as described in 15 CFR 290.5 and other basic provisions of this notice. Proposals that satisfy these requirements will be designated as qualified proposals. Non-qualified proposals will not be evaluated and will be returned to the applicant.

b. Proposal Review

NIST will appoint an evaluation panel, consisting of one non-Federal Government employee and at least two Federal Government employees, to conduct an independent and objective review and evaluation of all qualified proposals in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth in this notice. Based upon this review, the panel will deliberate, and each panelist will assign a numeric score based on the evaluation criteria. Proposals with an average score of 70 or higher will be deemed finalists and will receive site visits.

c. Site Visits

Finalists will be notified and a day, time, and location for a site visit will be established. The panel will review finalists again on site, based on the evaluation criteria. Subsequently, the panel will deliberate again, and each panelist may revise his or her numeric scores based on the evaluation criteria, assessing equal weight to each of the four criteria. Proposals are then ranked based on the sum of the panelists' final numeric scores. The ranked proposals are then submitted to the Director of NIST or the Director of the NIST MEP Program for final award recommendation to the NIST Grants Officer.

d. Award Determination

The Director of NIST or the Director of the NIST MEP Program shall make final recommendation of whether an award should be made to the proposing organization based on a review of the panel's adherence to program objectives and program procedures and the availability of funds. The final approval of the selected applications and award of cooperative agreements will be made by the NIST Grants Officer based on compliance with program requirements and whether the recommended applicants appear competently managed, responsible, and committed to achieving project objectives. The decision of the Grants Officer is final.

Application Forms and Kit

The proposal must, at a minimum, include the following:

A. An executive summary of the proposed project, consistent with the Evaluation Criteria stated in this notice.

B. A description of the proposed project, sufficient to permit evaluation of the proposal, in accordance with the proposal Evaluation Criteria stated in this notice.

C. A detailed budget for the proposed project that breaks out all expenses for year 1 of operation and identifies all sources of funds to pay these expenses.

D. A budget outline for annual costs and sources of funds for potential years 2 through 5 and beyond. It is expected, especially for newly created centers, that year one costs are lower because of a ramp-up of operations from start-up to the point where the center is fully operational and services are being provided. If such a ramp-up of operations is to occur, this should be reflected in the budget outline for years 2 through 5 and beyond. A detailed budget and budget narrative will be required prior to each of years 2 through 5.

E. A description of the qualifications of key personnel who will be assigned to work on the proposed project.

F. A statement of work that discusses the specific tasks to be carried out, including a schedule of measurable events and milestones.

G. A Standard Form (SF) 424, 424–A, and 424–B (Rev 7/97) prescribed by 15 CFR part 14 (OMB Circular A–110), Form CD–511, Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; Drug-Free Workplace Requirements and Lobbying, and Form CD–346, Applicant For Funding Assistance (Name Check). The SF 424 and CD series of forms will not be considered part of the page count of the proposal.

In addition, the proposal must contain the requirements identified in 15 CFR 290.5(a)(3), which are:

A. A plan for the allocation of intellectual property rights associated with any invention or copyright which may result from the involvement in the Center's technology transfer or research activities consistent with the conditions of 15 CFR 290.9.

B. A statement that provides adequate assurances that the host organization will contribute the required cost share. (Although the MEP regulation, 15 CFR 290.5(a)(3)(ii), states that applicants should provide evidence that the proposed Center will be self-supporting after six years, this requirement is no longer in effect, as indicated above.)

C. A statement describing linkages to industry, government, and educational organizations within its service region.

D. A statement defining the initial service region including a statement of the constituency to be served and the level of service to be provided, as well as outyear plans.

E. A statement agreeing to focus the mission of the Center on technology transfer activities and not to exclude companies based on state boundaries.

F. A proposed plan for the annual evaluation of the success of the Center by the Program, including appropriate criteria for consideration, and weighting of those criteria.

G. A plan to focus the Center's technology emphasis on areas consistent with NIST technology research programs and organizational expertise.

H. A description of the planned Center sufficient to permit NIST to evaluate the proposal in accordance with 15 CFR 290.6.

The proposal must not exceed 25 typewritten pages in length. The proposal must contain both technical and cost information. The proposal page count shall include every page, including pages that contain words, table of contents, executive summary, management information and qualifications, resumes, figures, tables, and pictures. All proposals shall be printed such that pages are single-sided, with no more than fifty-five (55) lines per page. Use 21.6 x 27.9 cm (8½″ x 11″) paper or A4 metric paper. Use an easy-to-read font of not more than about 5 characters per cm (fixed pitch font of 12 or fewer characters per inch or proportional font of point size 10 or larger). Smaller type may be used in figures and tables, but must be clearly legible. Margins on all sides (top, bottom, left and right) must be at least 2.5 cm. (1″). The applicant may submit a separately bound document of appendices containing other supporting information. The proposal should be self-contained and not rely on the appendices for meeting criteria. Excess pages in the proposal will not be considered in the evaluation. Applicants must submit one signed original plus two (2) copies of the proposal.

Additional Information

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the **Federal Register** notice of October 1, 2001 (66 FR 49917) , as amended by the **Federal Register** notice published on October 30, 2002 (67 FR 66109), are applicable to this solicitation.

Where Web sites are referenced within this notice, those who do not have access to the Internet websites may contact the appropriate Program official to obtain information.

Unsuccessful Applications: Unsuccessful applicants will be held in the Program Office for two years and then destroyed.

Fees and/or Profit: It is not the intent of NIST to pay fee or profit for any of the financial assistance awards that may be issued pursuant to this announcement.

Automated Standardized Application for Payment System (ASAP): The Department of Commerce is using the Department of Treasury's ASAP. In order to receive payments for services under these awards, recipients will be required to register with the Department of Treasury and indicate whether or not they will use the on-line or voice response method of withdrawing funds from their ASAP established accounts. More information regarding ASAP can be found on-line at *http://www.fms.treas.gov/asap/index.html.*

Paperwork Reduction Act: The standard forms in the application kit involve collections of information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act. The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, 424B, SF–LLL, and CD–346 have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the respective Control Numbers 0348–0043, 0348–0044, 0348–0040, 0348–0046, and 0605–0001.

Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

Classification: This funding notice was determined to be ''not significant'' for purposes of Executive Order 12866.

It has been determined that this notice does not contain policies with Federalism implications as that term is defined in Executive Order 13132.

Applications under these programs are not subject to Executive Order 12372, ''Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.''

Because notice and comment are not required under 5 U.S.C. 553, or any other law, for notices relating to public property, loans, grants, benefits or contracts (5 U.S.C. 553(a)), a Regulatory Flexibility Analysis is not required and has not been prepared for this notice, 5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*

Dated: March 11, 2003.

Karen H. Brown,

Deputy Director, NIST.

[FR Doc. 03–6349 Filed 3–17–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 022703A]

Endangered and Threatened Species; Take of Anadromous Fish

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Receipt of application for scientific research permits (1415 and 1419) and request for comment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that NMFS has received an application for scientific research from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in Sacramento, CA (1415) and California Departments of Fish and Game and Water Resources (CDFG/CDWR) in Oroville and Sacramento, CA (1419). These permits would affect three Evolutionarily Significant Units (ESUs) of salmonids identified in the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION section below. This document serves to notify the public of the availability of the permit applications for review and comment.

DATES: Written comments on the permit applications must be received at the appropriate address or fax number (see **ADDRESSES**) no later than 5 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on April 17, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on this request should be sent to the appropriate office as indicated below. Comments may also be sent via fax to the number indicated for the request. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or the Internet. The applications and related documents are available for review, by appointment. For permits 1415 and 1419: Protected Resources Division, NMFS, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 8–300, Sacramento, CA 95814 (ph: 916–930–3600, fax: 916–930–3629). Documents may also be reviewed by appointment in the Office of Protected Resources, F/PR3, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 3226 (301 713 1401).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rosalie del Rosario at phone number 916–930–3600, or e-mail: Rosalie.delRosario@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority

Issuance of permits and permit modifications, as required by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 1543) (ESA), is based on a finding that such permits/modifications: