

OMB Control Number: 0578-0013.

Summary of Collection: The Long term Contracting regulations at 7 CFR part 630, and the Conservation program regulations at 7 CFR parts (12, 610, 622, 624, 631, 632, 633, 634, 636, 701, 702, 752, 1410, 1465, 1466, 1467 and 1491) set forth the basic policies, program provisions, and eligibility requirements for owners and operators to enter into and carry out long-term conservation program contracts with technical assistance under the various programs. These programs authorize federal technical and financial cost sharing assistance for conservation treatment with eligible land users. The financial assistance is based on a conservation plan that is made a part of an agreement or contract for a period of no less than one year. Under the terms of the agreement, the participant agrees to apply, or arrange to apply, the conservation treatment specified in the conservation plan. In return for this agreement, federal cost-share payments are made to the land user, or third party, upon successful application of the conservation treatment.

Need and Use of the Information: Natural Resource and Conservation Service (NRCS) will collect information on cost sharing and technical assistance, making land use changes and install measure to conserve, develop and utilize soil, water, and related natural resources on participants land. NRCS uses the information to ensure the proper utilization of program funds, including application for participation, easement acquisition, contract implementation, conservation planning, and application for payment.

Description of Respondents: Individuals or households; Farms; Not-for-profit institutions; State, Local or Tribal Government.

Number of Respondents: 383,312.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting; Annually, Other.

Total Burden Hours: 755,152.

Ruth Brown,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

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BILLING CODE 3410-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Research Service, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

Solicitation of Input From Stakeholders on Research, Education and Extension Programs Related to Food Safety Administered by the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service and the Agricultural Research Service

AGENCIES: Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service and Agricultural Research Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of stakeholders' listening session on food safety research priorities.

SUMMARY: Section 102(b) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) (7 U.S.C. 7612) requires the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) and the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) in establishing priorities for agricultural research, extension, and education activities conducted or funded by CSREES and ARS to solicit and consider input and recommendations from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, extension, or education. As part of the Agencies' ongoing stakeholder input processes, CSREES and ARS are soliciting input and comments on the top food safety research priorities of partners and stakeholders. As part of this effort, CSREES and ARS are planning to conduct a "Stakeholders' Listening Session on Food Safety Research Priorities" in Denver, Colorado.

Dates and Addresses: The listening session will be held on Monday, June 30, 2003, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Radisson Hotel Denver Stapleton Plaza; 3333 Quebec Street; Denver, CO 80207. Attendees must make their own hotel arrangements.

To aid participants in scheduling their attendance, the following schedule is anticipated for the listening session: 8:30 a.m.–9 a.m. Introductory Remarks and Background. 9 a.m.–12 p.m. Scheduled 5-Minute Comment Periods. 1 p.m.–5 p.m. Scheduled 5-Minute Comment Periods.

Persons interested in submitting comments but unable to attend should submit written presentations to be received by 5 p.m. e.d.t. July 14, 2003. Send written presentations to Dr. Pat Kendall at the address below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: All those intending to attend and make oral

presentations at this meeting are required to pre-register. A List of Participants, including all those who have pre-registered, will be available at the Listening Session. Participants may pre-register by contacting Dr. Pat Kendall at (970) 491-7334, by fax at (970) 491-7252 or by e-mail to foodnutr@coop.ext.colostate.edu or by registering on line at www.caahs.colostate.edu/fshn/foodsafety/.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose of This Listening Session

The purpose of this Listening Session is to allow CSREES and ARS partners and stakeholders an opportunity to identify up to five food safety research priorities requiring increased attention over the next five years. All oral presentations should follow the following format:

- (1) Provide a clear description of up to five food safety priorities;
- (2) Describe the current state of affairs for each priority; and
- (3) Indicate where the organization/agency would like to be in five years in regard to each priority.

ARS and CSREES are seeking comments on research priorities related to food safety topics in meat and poultry and fresh fruits and vegetables. Comments are solicited on such subjects including, but not limited to, pre- and post-harvest pathogen reduction, mycotoxins, residues, poisonous plants, good manufacturing practices, worker education and antibiotic resistance. The food safety research priorities identified by partners and stakeholders will provide valuable input for USDA food safety agencies. National Program Leaders from CSREES and ARS will conduct a series of follow-up meetings to develop national and agency-wide strategies for working with partners and stakeholders to help them achieve their 5-year food safety research goals.

Making Reservations To Attend This Listening Session

When making a reservation for a 5-minute oral comment period, participants should provide a title for their presentation. More time may be available in the comment session, depending on the number of people wishing to make a presentation. Reservations will be confirmed on a first-come, first-served basis. The final 30 minutes of the Listening Session will be reserved for unscheduled participants wishing to make 5-minute presentations. Participants who require a sign language interpreter or other special accommodations should contact Dr. Pat Kendall as directed above.

All those making oral presentations at the meeting are required to submit the text of their written presentations. Those unable to attend the meeting may also submit written presentations. Written presentations will be accepted through July 14, 2003. Written presentations may be submitted for the record by e-mailing them to foodnutr@coop.ext.colostate.edu or by mailing them to: CSREES/ARS Listening Session; c/o Dr. Pat Kendall; Colorado State University; Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition-1571; Fort Collins, CO 80523-1571. Please provide three copies of the written presentations. Presentations also may be faxed to Dr. Kendall at (970) 491-7252.

Information gathered from the Listening Session will be available for review on the CSREES Web page (<http://www.reeusda.gov>).

Background on Listening Sessions and CSREES Programs

Section 102(b) of AREERA (7 U.S.C. 7612) requires that CSREES and ARS, in establishing priorities for agricultural research, extension, and education activities conducted or funded by CSREES and ARS, solicit and consider input and recommendations from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, extension, or education. As part of this ongoing effort, CSREES and ARS conduct listening sessions to solicit input and comments on the effectiveness of the existing agricultural research, education and extension programs administered by CSREES and ARS in meeting current and future challenges in the food and agricultural sciences.

Section 1402 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), 7 U.S.C. 3101, specifies that the purposes of agricultural research, extension, and education are to (1) enhance the competitiveness of the United States agriculture and food industry in an increasingly competitive world environment; (2) increase the long-term productivity of the United States agriculture and food industry while maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base on which rural America and the United States agricultural economy depend; (3) develop new uses and new products for agricultural commodities, such as alternative fuels, and develop new crops; (4) support agricultural research and extension to promote economic opportunity in rural communities and to meet the increasing demand for information and technology transfer throughout the United States agriculture industry; (5) improve risk management

in the United States agriculture industry; (6) improve the safe production and processing of, and adding of value to, United States food and fiber resources using methods that maintain the balance between yield and environmental soundness; (7) support higher education in agriculture to give the next generation of Americans the knowledge, technology, and applications necessary to enhance the competitiveness of United States agriculture; and (8) maintain an adequate, nutritious, and safe supply of food to meet human nutritional needs and requirements.

Section 1404 of NARETPA, 7 U.S.C. 3103, defines "Food and Agricultural Sciences" as meaning basic, applied, and developmental research, extension, and teaching activities in food and fiber, agricultural, renewable natural resources, forestry, and physical and social sciences, including activities relating to the following: (1) Animal health, production, and well-being, (2) plant health and production, (3) animal and plant germplasm collection and preservation, (4) aquaculture, (5) food safety, (6) soil and water conservation and improvement, (7) forestry, horticulture, and range management, (8) nutritional sciences and management, (9) farm enhancement, including financial management, input efficiency, and profitability, (10) home economics, (11) rural human ecology, (12) youth development and agricultural education, including 4-H clubs, (13) expansion of domestic and international markets for agricultural commodities and products, including agricultural trade barrier identification and analysis, (14) information management and technology transfer related to agriculture, (15) biotechnology related to agriculture, and (16) the processing, distributing, marketing, and utilization of food and agricultural products.

CSREES currently supports agricultural research, extension and education activities through a broad array of programs which includes both formula funded and competitively awarded grant programs. The formula funded programs include the agricultural research programs authorized under the Hatch Act (7 U.S.C. 361a *et seq.*) for the State Agricultural Experiment Stations; section 1445 of NARETPA (7 U.S.C. 3222) for the 1890 Land-Grant Institutions including Tuskegee University, and West Virginia State College; the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act (16 U.S.C. 582a *et seq.*); and section 1433 of NARETPA (7 U.S.C. 3195) for the Animal Health and Disease Research

program. The agricultural extension programs are funded under section 3 of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 343) for the cooperative extension services at the 1862 Land-Grant Institutions; section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 343(d)) for targeted, national programs; and section 1444 of NARETPA (7 U.S.C. 3221) for the 1890 Land-Grant Institutions including Tuskegee University, and West Virginia State College. Section 534(a) of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note) authorizes funding for the 1994 Institutions to strengthen their teaching programs in food and agricultural sciences.

The CSREES competitive grant programs include the National Research Initiative authorized under section 2(b) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i); the Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems authorized under section 401 of AREERA (7 U.S.C. 7621); the Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program authorized under section 406 of AREERA (7 U.S.C. 7626); the Food and Agricultural Sciences National Needs Graduate Fellowship Grants Program authorized under section 1417(b)(6) of NARETPA (7 U.S.C. 3152(b)(6)); the Higher Education Challenge Grants Program authorized under section 1417(b)(1) of NARETPA (7 U.S.C. 3152(b)(1)); the Secondary Agriculture Education Challenge Grants Program authorized under section 1417(j) of NARETPA (7 U.S.C. 3152(j)); and the Hispanic-Serving Institutions Education Grants Program authorized under section 1455 of NARETPA (7 U.S.C. 3241). In addition, sections 535 and 536 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note) authorize competitive capacity building and research grant programs for the 1994 Institutions. Further information about CSREES grant programs is available through the CSREES Web page at <http://www.reeusda.gov> as the above list of CSREES grant programs is not exhaustive.

A majority of the agricultural research, extension, and education activities funded by CSREES are conducted through the 1862 Land-Grant Institutions which were established under the First Morrill Act (7 U.S.C. 301 *et seq.*); the 1890 Land-Grant Institutions under the Second Morrill Act (7 U.S.C. 321 *et seq.*); and the 1994 Institutions under the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note).

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is the in-house research agency of

the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Authority for ARS research is derived from the Department of Agriculture Organic Act of 1862 (7 U.S.C. 2201), which established the Department of Agriculture. The scope of USDA's agricultural research programs has been expanded and extended many times since the Department was first created. Today ARS has a workforce of approximately 8,000 employees including 2,000 scientists representing a wide range of disciplines. ARS conducts 1,200 research projects at over 100 locations across the country and at four overseas laboratories. The National Agricultural Library and the National Arboretum are also part of ARS.

ARS conducts research to develop and transfer solutions to agricultural problems of high national priority and provides information access and dissemination to (1) Ensure high-quality, safe food and other agricultural products, (2) assess the nutritional needs of Americans, (3) sustain a competitive agricultural economy, (4) enhance the natural resource base and the environment, and (5) provide economic opportunities for rural citizens, communities, and society as a whole.

To achieve these objectives, ARS research projects are divided into National Programs. Currently, ARS research is organized into 22 National Programs which are described in detail on the ARS Web site at <http://www.nps.ars.usda.gov/>. ARS also works to ensure the timely transfer of new knowledge and technologies to potential users. ARS seeks to broaden public understanding of the value of agriculture and agricultural research to ensure the continued primacy of the U.S. agriculture in the 21st century. Program direction related specifically to food safety programs can be found at <http://www.nps.ars.usda.gov/programs/programs.htm?NPNUMBER=108>.

Done in Washington, DC, this 11th day of June, 2003.

Joseph J. Jen,

Under Secretary, Research, Education, and Economics.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Federal Crop Insurance Corporation

Request for Applications (RFA): Community Outreach and Assistance Partnership Program

ACTION: Announcement of availability of funds and request for applications for

the Community Outreach and Assistance Partnership Program.

SUMMARY: In accordance with section 522(d) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (Act), the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC), operating through the Risk Management Agency (RMA), announces the availability of up to approximately \$3.5 million in fiscal year (FY) 2003 for collaborative outreach and assistance programs for women, limited resource, socially disadvantaged and other traditionally under-served farmers and ranchers, who produce agricultural commodities covered by the noninsured crop disaster assistance program (7 U.S.C. 7333); specialty crops; and under served commodities (For purposes of this announcement, these commodities are collectively referred to as "Priority Commodities"). Awards under this program will be made on a competitive basis for projects of up to one year. Recipients of awards must demonstrate non-financial benefits from a partnership agreement and must agree to the substantial involvement of RMA in the project. This announcement lists the information needed to submit an application under this program.

Closing Dates: The closing date and time for receipt of applications under this RFA is 5 p.m. Eastern Time on August 1, 2003. Applications received after the deadline will not be evaluated by the technical review panel.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact: Marie Buchanan, National Outreach Program Manager, Telephone (202) 690-2686, Facsimile (202) 690-1518, E-mail: Marie.Buchanan@usda.gov. You may also obtain additional information regarding this announcement from the RMA Web site at <http://www.rma.usda.gov>. Applicants may download an application package for the community outreach and assistance partnership program from the Risk Management Agency (RMA) Web site at: <http://www.rma.usda.gov>. Applicants may also request an application package from: Marie Buchanan, USDA RMA, Community Outreach and Assistance Program, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Room 6709, Stop 0805, Washington, DC 20250-0805. Telephone (202) 690-2686, Facsimile (202) 690-1518, E-mail: Marie.Buchanan@usda.gov.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit completed and signed application packages using overnight mail or delivery service to ensure timely receipt by the USDA. The applicable address for such submissions is: USDA-

RMA, Community Outreach and Assistance Programs, c/o Marie Buchanan, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Room 6709, Stop 0805, Washington, DC 20250-0805.

Completed and signed application packages sent via the U.S. Postal Service must also be sent to the above address. Applicants using the U.S. Postal Service should allow for extra security-processing time for mail delivered to government offices.

Paperwork Reduction Act

Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, as amended (44 U.S.C. chapter 25), the collection of information requirements contained in this announcement have been approved under OMB Document Nos. 0348-0043, 0348-0044, and 0348-0046 and 0348-0040.

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number for these programs is 10.450.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This announcement consists of six parts:

- Part I. General Information
 - A. Legislative Authority
 - B. Background
 - C. Project Goal
 - D. Purpose
 - E. Definition of Priority Commodities
- Part II. Eligibility/Funding
 - A. Eligible Applicants
 - B. Non-financial Benefits
 - C. Project Period
 - D. Availability of Funds and Amounts
- Part III. Program Description
 - A. Recipient Activities
 - B. RMA Activities
 - C. Other Activities
- Part IV—Preparation of an Application
 - A. Program Application Materials
 - B. Content of Applications
 - C. Submission of Applications
 - D. Acknowledgement of Applications
- Part V—Review Process
 - A. General
 - B. Evaluation Criteria and Weights
 - C. Confidentiality
- Part VI—Additional Information
 - A. Requirement to Use Program Logo
 - B. Requirement to Provide Project Information to an RMA representative
 - C. Private Crop Insurance Organizations and Potential Conflicts of Interest
 - D. Access to Panel Review Information
 - E. Notification of Partnership Agreement Awards
 - F. Confidential Aspects of Proposals and Awards
 - G. Reporting Requirements
 - H. Audit Requirements
 - I. Prohibitions and Requirements with Regard to Lobbying
 - J. Applicable OMB Circulars