

Critical Agricultural Materials

Fiscal Year 2009 Request for Applications

APPLICATION DEADLINE: July 7, 2009



U.S. Department of Agriculture



Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

**COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE;
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

CRITICAL AGRICULTURAL MATERIALS

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT - FY 2009

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.200.

DATES: Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on July 7, 2009 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline normally will not be considered for funding.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is requesting comments regarding this Request for Applications (RFA) from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and will be used to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current RFA from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education and extension for use in formulating future RFAs for competitive programs. Written stakeholder comments on this RFA should be submitted in accordance with the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this Notice.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy and Oversight Branch; Office of Extramural Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; USDA; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: RFP-OEP@csrees.usda.gov. (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the **Critical Agricultural Materials RFA**.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CSREES announces the availability of grant funds and requests applications for the Critical Agricultural Materials Program for fiscal year (FY) 2009 to develop and demonstrate industrial polymers that are manufactured from domestically produced crop materials. The amount available for support of this program in FY 2009 is approximately \$1,000,000.

This notice identifies the objectives for Critical Agricultural Materials projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a Critical Agricultural Materials grant. CSREES additionally requests stakeholder input from any interested party for use in the development of the next RFA for this program.

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PART I – FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

The authority for this program is under Section 5(d) of the Critical Agricultural Materials Act, as amended (Pub. L. 95-592) to develop and demonstrate industrial polymers that are manufactured from domestically produced crop materials and are of strategic and industrial importance to benefit the economy, defense and general well-being of the Nation. Such products replace petroleum-based products, and offer opportunities to create new businesses and new markets for agricultural materials.

B. Purpose and Priorities

Crop-based materials used in polymer formulations can serve as building blocks to replace petroleum-based materials. Advances in polymer science have resulted in products with superior functional performance and also address environmental and human health concerns. Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are considered to be a major human health issue and polymer products that can meet performance requirements with minimal or no use of VOCs are of interest to CSREES. Coatings are the main contributor to VOC emissions after transportation and energy sectors. Examples of products include: architectural paints, paper coatings, ultraviolet cured coatings, wood-based composites, and polymer additives.

C. Program Area Description

In FY 2009, the Critical Agricultural Materials Program will support the development and demonstration of novel, environmentally friendly technologies for use in paints and coatings, and adhesives for composites. The program will also support and give priority to proposals that include a life cycle analysis objective, comparing the biobased product with a fossil-based counterpart using the Building for Environmental and Economic Sustainability model (BEES) developed by the National Institute for Standards and Technology (http://www.bfrl.nist.gov/oae/software/bees/bees_USDA.html). This model measures the environmental impact of every stage in the life cycle of a product, and is currently being used by USDA for the Biopreferred Program (<http://www.biopreferred.gov>) CSREES anticipates that projects supported by the Critical Agricultural Materials Program will result in products, specifically paints, coatings and adhesives that can help federal agencies, state entities and companies meet their environmental goals. CSREES also anticipates that the BEES model will help identify gaps in product development that warrant further research in the functional and environmental performance of the product(s).

Examples of funded projects can be found at: <http://cris.csrees.usda.gov/cgi-bin/starfinder/0?path=fastlink1.txt&id=anon&pass=&search=gc=mm.2%20AND%20gy%3E2002&format=WEBTITLESG>.

PART II – AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. CSREES anticipates funding one or two projects which will contribute to the development and demonstration of biobased polymers. The total amount of funds available is approximately \$1,000,000. The project period shall not exceed 3 years.

B. Type of Applications

In FY 2009, applications may be submitted to the Critical Agricultural Materials Program as one of the following types of requests:

(1) New application. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the Critical Agricultural Materials Program. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

(2) Renewal application. This is a project application that requests additional funding for a project beyond the period that was approved in an original or amended award. Applications for renewed funding must contain the same information as required for new applications, and additionally must contain a Progress Report (attach to R&R Other Project Information Form according to Part IV, B, 3 (c)). Renewal applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in the appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

In FY 2009, Critical Agricultural Materials will award standard grants.

PART III – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by any person, or public or private agency or organization.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

CSREES does not require matching or cost sharing support for this program, and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria.

PART IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted to CSREES via Grants.gov in response to this RFA.

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the Project Director (PD) first contact an Authorized Representative (AR) (also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative or AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grant.gov. If the organization is not prepared, the AR should see http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp for steps for preparing to submit applications through Grants.gov.

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. In order to access, complete and submit applications, applicants must download and install a version of Adobe Reader compatible with Grants.gov. This software is essential to apply for CSREES Federal assistance awards. For basic system requirements and download instructions, please see http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp. To verify that you have a compatible version of Adobe Reader, Grants.gov established a test package that will assist you in making that determination. Grants.gov Adobe Versioning Test Package: <http://www.grants.gov/applicants/AdobeVersioningTestOnly.jsp>.
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on “**Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions**,” enter the funding opportunity number “USDA-CSREES-OP-002325” in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.” This Guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If assistance is needed to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating Adobe forms), refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

Grants.gov customer support

Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726

Business Hours: M-F 7:00 am – 9 pm Eastern Standard Time

Email: support@grants.gov

See <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared following Parts V and VI of the document entitled **“CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.”** This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed in order to prepare an application in response to this RFA. If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.

Note the attachment requirements (e.g., portable document format) in Part III section 3. of the Guide. ANY PROPOSALS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM CSREES REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from CSREES review. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business on the closing date in the RFA.

If you do not own PDF-generating software, Grants.gov provides online tools to assist applicants. Users will find a link to “Convert Documents to PDF” on <http://grants.gov/assets/PDFConversion.pdf>.

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

2. SF 424 (R&R) Project/Performance Site Location(s)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 3. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

3. R&R Other Project Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 4. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Project Summary/Abstract (Field 6. on the Form) – PDF Attachment.

The summary should include the relevance of the project to the goals of Critical Agricultural Materials (see Part I, C.).

b. Project Narrative (Field 7. on the Form) – PDF Attachment.

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 12 pages (**single- or double-spaced**) of written text and up to 3 additional pages for figures and tables. This maximum (15 pages) has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

Applicants should provide the following program-specific information in their applications:

i) Introduction. A clear statement of the long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives or research questions of the proposed project should be included. Summarize the body of knowledge or other past activities that substantiate the need for the proposed project. Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities related to the proposed project including the work of key project personnel. Preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed research should be included in this section.

ii) Rationale and Significance. Concisely present the rationale behind the proposed research. Document priority setting process and stakeholder involvement, and any national coordination of research. Describe how the applications' goals and priorities relate to potential long-range improvement in and sustainability of U.S. agriculture. Novel ideas or contributions that the proposed project offers should also be discussed in this section.

iii) Approach. The activities proposed or problems being addressed must be clearly stated and the approaches being applied clearly described. Specifically, this section must include:

- A description of the activities proposed and the sequence in which the activities are to be performed;
- Methods to be used in carrying out the proposed project, including the feasibility of the methods;
- Description of how the BEES life cycle analysis will be incorporated into the project;
- Expected outcomes;
- Means by which results will be analyzed, assessed, or interpreted;
- Uses for results or products;
- History of research that focuses on performance and the elimination of volatile organic compounds from coatings, composites, and adhesives;
- History of scale-up capabilities and/or commercial trials to test and validate novel emulsion polymers, reactive surfactants, macromonomers, thickeners, reactive diluents, and adhesives; and
- History of collaboration with industry.

c. Other Attachments (Field 11. on the Form) – **PDF Attachment.**

Progress Report. This requirement applies to "Renewal applications" (see Part II, B.(2) "Types of Applications.") Applicants submitting renewal applications should submit for this section a brief progress report. Applications for renewed funding must contain the same information as required for new applicants and will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate areas to which they are assigned. There is no page limit for the progress report.

4. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 5. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide. A Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) should be completed for the PD and each senior associate, and other professional.

a. Attach a biographical sketch (vitae) of the PD and each Co-PD, senior associate, and other professional personnel.

b. Attach Current and Pending Support information (see CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide p. 31 & 32, item 5.3, for guidelines and information format) for each senior/key person identified above. Note: Even if no other funding is currently reported under the “Active” section of this attachment, you must still list information for this grant application under the “Pending” section of this attachment for each senior/key person identified above. Total committed time for each person may not exceed 100% for Current and Pending projects combined.

5. R&R Personal Data – As noted in Part V, 6. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide, the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award. If completing the information, **do not enter any data in the field requesting the social security number.**

6. R&R Budget

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 7. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

Complete one R&R Budget Form for each 12-month period, plus a cumulative budget for the entire project.

7. SF 424 (R&R) Subaward Budget Attachment (Only required if the application includes subawards) Include subaward budgets for each 12-month period, plus a cumulative budget for the entire project in the R&R Subaward Budget Attachment and use the Budget Justification to explain each budget item. All subaward proposals require the signature of that organization’s AR. **Applicants will note that the R&R Subaward Budget Attachment(s) Form allows no more than 10 R&R Subaward Budget Files for a grant application. Applicants are instructed to include any remaining subaward budget(s) under Field K. “Budget Justification”, incorporating them as part of the required PDF attachment.**

8. Supplemental Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 1. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 2. Program Code. Enter the program code name “Critical Ag Materials” and the program code is “MM.2”.

b. Field 8. Conflict of Interest. A conflict of interest list is required under this RFA.

C. Submission Date and Time

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by COB on July 7, 2009 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

The receipt of all applications will be acknowledged by e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received a confirmation message from CSREES within 15 days of submission of the application, please contact the Agency Contact identified in the RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in a delay in the issuance of an award. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.**

D. Funding Restrictions

CSREES has determined that grant funds awarded under this authority may not be used for the renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

Section 7132 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 amended the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3310(a)), limiting indirect costs for grants to 22 percent of the total Federal funds provided under each award. Therefore, when preparing budgets, applicants should limit their requests for recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of their institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 22 percent of total Federal funds awarded.

E. Other Submission Requirements

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled "A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov."

PART V – APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

Each application will be evaluated in a two-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel.

Reviewers will be selected based upon training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) The level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields; (c) the need to include as reviewers other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs; (d) the need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) the need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness to producers and the general public of each application.

B. Evaluation Criteria

Specific criteria to be used to select awardees: Value 50%

- Demonstrated knowledge base in the application of agricultural materials in polymer science and engineering;
- Demonstrated knowledge and/or history of research, development and marketing of paints, coatings and adhesives derived from new and traditional crop materials;
- Demonstrated history of research that focuses on performance and the elimination of volatile organic compounds from paints, coatings, composites, and adhesives;
- Demonstrated history of scale-up capabilities and commercial trials to test and validate novel emulsion polymers, reactive surfactants, macromonomers, thickeners, reactive diluents, and adhesives;
- Demonstrated ability to integrate a life cycle perspective during product research and development; and
- Demonstrated history of collaboration with industry.

General criteria to be used to select awardees: Value 50%

1. Scientific Merit of the Application for Research: Value 25%

- Novelty, innovation, uniqueness, and originality;
- Ability to transfer knowledge gained from these systems to organisms of importance to U.S. agriculture;
- Clarity and delineation of objectives;
- Adequacy of the description of the undertaking and suitability and feasibility of

- methodology;
- Demonstration of feasibility through preliminary and current data; and
- Probability of success of project.

2. Qualifications of Project Personnel, Adequacy of Facilities, and Project Management Capability: Value 25%

- Qualifications of applicant (individual or team) to conduct the proposed project, including performance record and potential for future accomplishments.

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution shall be determined by reference to the current Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, Virginia 22042. Phone: (703) 532-2300. Web site: <http://www.hepinc.com>.

Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of peer reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

D. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one-time basis, with updates on an as needed basis, as part of the responsibility determination prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another CSREES program. CSREES will provide copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors which may exclude an applicant from receiving Federal financial and non-financial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

PART VI – AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of CSREES shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the awarding official of CSREES 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 practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by CSREES under this RFA shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's assistance regulations (part 2 CFR 215 and 3019 of 7 CFR).

B. Award Notice

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the following:

- (1) Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to which the Administrator has issued an award under the terms of this request for applications;
- (2) Title of project;
- (3) Name(s) and institution(s) of PDs chosen to direct and control approved activities;
- (4) Identifying award number assigned by the Department;
- (5) Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the Administrator during the project period;
- (7) Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
- (8) Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
- (9) Applicable award terms and conditions (see <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view CSREES award terms and conditions);

(10) Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

(11) Other information or provisions deemed necessary by CSREES to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several Federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to projects under this program. These include, but are not limited to:

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3—USDA debt collection regulations.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121—USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

7 CFR Part 3015—USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, implementing OMB directives (i.e., OMB Circular Nos. A-21 and A-122, now codified at 2 CFR Parts 220 and 230) and incorporating provisions of 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308 (formerly the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Pub. L. No. 95-224), as well as general policy requirements applicable to recipients of Departmental financial assistance.

7 CFR Part 3017--USDA implementation of Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement).

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

7 CFR Part 3019—USDA implementation of OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3021—USDA implementation of Government Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance).

7 CFR Part 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3407–CSREES procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

29 U.S.C. 794 (section 504, 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 and other institutions of higher education, in Federally assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

D. Expected Output and Reporting Requirements

Grantees are required to submit initial project information and annual and summary reports (OMB No. 0524-0042) to CSREES' Current Research Information System (CRIS). The CRIS database contains narrative project information, progress/impact statements, and final technical reports that are made available to the public. For applications recommended for funding, instructions on preparing and submitting project documentation will be provided to the applicant by the agency contact. **Documentation must be submitted to CRIS before CSREES funds will be released.** Project reports will be requested by the CRIS office when required. For more information about CRIS, visit <http://cris.csrees.usda.gov>.

Additional annual reports will be requested to provide timely information for the Secretary of Agriculture and Congress. The NPL will request additional reports as needed.

PART VII – AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact Carmela Bailey, National Program Leader - Plant and Animal Systems; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, Stop 2220; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250 – 2220; telephone: (202) 401-6443; fax: (202) 401-5172; e-mail: cbailey@csrees.usda.gov.

PART VIII OTHER INFORMATION

A. Access to Review Information

Copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments will be sent to the applicant PD after the review process has been completed.

B. Use of Funds; Changes

1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility

Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, the awardee may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of award funds.

2. Changes in Project Plans

a. The permissible changes by the awardee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other similar aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the awardee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the program contact.

b. Changes in approved goals or objectives shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO 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 awardee and approved in writing by the ADO 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 awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

e. The project period may be extended by CSREES without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) as the ADO determines may be necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed three years. Any extension of time shall be conditioned upon prior request by the awardee and approval in writing by the ADO, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of award.

f. Changes in Approved Budget: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved budget must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to instituting such changes if the revision will involve transfers or expenditures of

amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or award.

C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of CSREES transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. The original copy of an application that does not result in an award will be retained by the Agency for a period of three years. Other copies will be destroyed. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

D. Regulatory Information

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

E. Definitions

Please refer to 7 CFR 3430, Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Grant Programs-- General Grant Administrative Provisions, for the applicable definitions for this CSREES grant program.

Application Submission Checklist

The following checklist contains suggested guidelines to verify prior to application submission:

- Have all attachments been submitted in the portable document format (PDF)?** Only PDF attachments will be accepted. See Part III, section 3.1 of the CSREES Application Guide.
 - Do all submitted PDF documents have one-inch margins and are typed or word processed using no type smaller than 12 point and **single- or double-spaced**? Are all PDF documents numbered sequentially on each page of the attachment? Are all page limitations for a given attachment followed? Submitted applications that do not meet these requirements for PDF attachments may be returned without review.
- Have all seven required components of the SF 424 Research and Related (R&R) Application Package been completed? Did you use the “Check Package for Errors”**

feature of the Adobe Reader (see Part IV, section 1.8 of the CSREES Application Guide)?

- SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet
- R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s)
- R&R Other Project Information
- R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)
- R&R Personal Data
- R&R Budget
- R&R Subaward Budget Attachment (Only if there is a subaward)
- Supplemental Information Form

◆ **SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet**

- Have all required fields been completed? Field 5 must contain the legal name of the eligible college or university.

◆ **R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s)**

- Have all required fields been completed?

◆ **R&R Other Project Information**

- Have the fields describing project potential or actual environmental impact been properly completed?
- Project Summary/Abstract
 - Has the Project Summary PDF been attached to this form in Field 6?
 - Does this section adhere to the format and content?
- Project Narrative
 - Has the Project Narrative PDF been attached to this form in Field 7?
 - Is the project fully described?
 - Does this section adhere to the format and page limitations?

◆ **R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)**

- Biographical Sketch
 - Has the biographical sketch (vitae) PDF for the PD, senior associate, and other professional personnel been attached?
- Current and Pending Support
 - Has the current and pending support PDF for all key personnel been attached?
 - Have all current and pending projects been listed and summarized, including this application?

◆ **Personal Data DO NOT PROVIDE THE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OF THE PROJECT DIRECTOR/PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR.**

- Have all fields been completed except for the social security number?

◆ **R&R Budget**

- Have all fields been completed?
- Budget Justification
 - Has the Budget Justification PDF been attached to this form in Field K?
 - Are budget items individually justified?

◆ **Supplemental Information Form**

- ❑ Does Field 2 indicate the Program Code Name and Program Code to which you are applying?
- ❑ Have you included the required **Conflict of Interest List** (PDF) attachments for key personnel **identifying full names (first, middle initial, last) and organizational affiliation**? (See format in CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide, Section VI, 1.8, p.46, for instructions.) Include this one-page attachment even if your responses to the questions are “N.A.”.