

Dialog Regarding Applied Economics Needs in the NIFA Transdisciplinary Paradigm

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Chair - Department of Agricultural Economics***



Background on C-FARE

- C-FARE is a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening the national presence of the agricultural economics profession.
- C-FARE's governing board includes agricultural economists representing a wide range of public and private sector interests.

Introduce Dr. Siva Sureshwaran

- Introduce **Siva Sureshwaran**
USDA NIFA National Program Leader
Division of Agricultural Systems
Email: ssureshwaran@nifa.usda.gov
Related Programs: [Family & Small Farms](#); [Rural & Community Development](#)
Related Funding Opportunities: [Beginning Farmer and Rancher](#); [Disaster Resilience for Rural Communities](#); [FP: Agriculture Economics and Rural Communities](#), [AFRI](#); [International Cooperative Biodiversity Groups](#); [Marketing & Trade](#), [SBIR](#); [Rural Development](#), [SBIR](#)



Siva is a National Program Leader for the Small Business Innovation Research Grants program and is responsible for the following topic areas: Markets and Trade, Rural Development, and Food and Nutrition.



Topics for Discussion

- Visibility of Ag Economists at NIFA
 - # of NIFA Economics staff have declined
 - Stakeholder Input for AFRI
 - Need more and stronger applications
 - Other: Acknowledgement of NIFA funding, need panelists, reviewers, etc.
- Overview of what was funded in FY 2010
- Other



NIFA staff

- 5 Ph.D. Economics
 - Dan Kugler (Administrator – on detail)
 - Robin Shoemaker (Marketing and Trade)
 - Fen Hunt (Natural resources, bioenergy, climate)
 - Susan Shockley (Family Econ);
 - Suresh (Ag econ, small farm, marketing and trade, rural development)
- Henry Bahn has retired
- What can we do to maintain visibility and serve stakeholders?



AFRI Stakeholder Input

- Used to develop RFA and determine need for funding
- Use of stakeholder input: examples from FY 2011 Ag Econ and Rural Communities Program
 - 2 priorities made integrated
 - All priorities offered every year
 - Entrepreneurship as a separate funding priority
 - More broadly defined to allow for investigator initiated topics
- Send emails to: RFP-OGFM@nifa.usda.gov.
- Other suggestions about collecting stakeholder input???



Applications for Competitive Grants

- Applications have decreased
- AFRI – Markets and Trade
 - In FY 2009 – we had 74 applications
 - In FY 2010 – we had 39 applications
 - In FY 2011 – we have 34 (include environmental topics)
- Implications???



Other

- Acknowledgement of funding
 - Has increased over time
 - But AFRI is the largest competitive grants program for Ag Economists
 - Saw only 3 posters at AAEA meeting with acknowledgement of NIFA
- Our Ag Econ Panel Managers are finding it hard to recruit panelists
 - Private costs versus public benefits???



Funding Opportunities

- AFRI Ag Econ and Rural Communities
 - Increased from \$10 to \$12 million before the budget reduction
 - FY 2012 and future budgets are uncertain.
- Opportunities exists in other AFRI programs
- Opportunities exists in other competitive grants
 - SBIR Markets and Trade topic is merged with another topic because of low number of applications



Overview of What Was Funded in FY 2010

- Lessons and Opportunities



The 3 CAP Climate Change Projects

More information is available at <http://cris.nifa.usda.gov/> (search by grant number)

- Climate Change, Mitigation, and Adaptation in Corn-Based Cropping Systems
 - Grant number: 2011-68002-30190
- Pacific Northwest – Regional Approaches to Climate Change
 - Grant number: 2011-68002-30191
- Integrating Research, Education, and Extension for Enhancing Southern Pine Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
 - Grant number: 2011-68002-30185



Bioenergy

- AFRI Sustainable Bioenergy Challenge area is anticipating its FY2010 CAP award announcement in July.
- Biomass Research & Development Initiative (BRDI) will announce its FY2010 awards soon. We can share with you after awards are announced.
- BRDI FY 2011 RFA was announced 4/15/2011; applications deadline is May 31, 2011:
<http://nifa.usda.gov/fo/biomassresearchanddevelopmentinitiative.cfm>. Economics and social aspects are incorporated in the RFA.
- We are still waiting for the FY2011 AFRI RFA announcement.



Childhood Obesity Prevention

- One Ag Economist led project - Rodolfo Nayga, University of Arkansas, *INTERVENTIONS FOR OBESITY PREVENTION TARGETING YOUNG CHILDREN IN AT-RISK ENVIRONMENTS: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH.*
- Other projects include agricultural economists as part of the project team.
- The complete list of integrated research, education and extension projects funded from 2010 applications can be accessed at: <http://cris.nifa.usda.gov/cgi-bin/starfinder/0?path=fastlink1.txt&id=anon&pass=&search=GC=A2101&format=WEBTITLESG>



Suggested Roundtable Questions

- Does your university or college provide an incentive structure or other policies to encourage faculty to apply to federal programs, especially transdisciplinary programs?
- Suggestions about what economics departments can do together to increase and improve applications?
- What can the profession do to provide the needed services to the agricultural economics discipline.
- What are individual departments doing now?



Thank you!

To send comments on USDA NIFA RFA's please email:
RFP-OGFM@nifa.usda.gov within six months of the release of the RFA.

Thank you for your time. If you ever have feedback for us or questions regarding opportunities please do not hesitate to contact C-FARE.

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