



AREERA State Plans of Work

This Plan of Work (POW) newsletter will focus on some general improvements that can be made to a Plan of Work and Annual Report of Accomplishments, formula research project issues, National Outcomes and Indicators Workshop, and welcoming new Plan of Work staff.

Discussion of the Formula Grant

Formula Grants need to have their value quantified and the quality of the outcomes continually being improved. A discussion in the Plan of Work and Annual Report on how the Formula Grant uniquely contributes to the body of research and extension work is greatly needed to remain relevant in this world of limited resources.

In this discussion it is important to show how the Formula Grants uniquely contribute to the economic impact of your work. What sets it apart from other non-formula grants? What would your institution not be able to do without the Hatch or Evans-Allen research grants? What economic impact is it having in terms of dollars generated or saved? Give examples of economic impact in your overview and in your Planned Programs and include these as change in condition outcomes. For example: we received the following economic impact outcome from Colorado.

The Colorado State University (CSU) Extension Wheat Improvement Work Team provides 18% of the total investment in developing and promoting CSU wheat varieties. Plantings of improved wheat varieties increased Colorado farmers' farm gate income by \$12,840,000 in 2008. Extension's share (18%) of this impact for the

Colorado wheat industry is \$2,311,000, or about \$13.70 returned for each \$1.00 invested.

A Different Paradigm for Including the Five Priorities in your Plan of Work and Annual Report

Rutgers University and Tennessee State University Research gave us an interesting twist on reporting and planning on the NIFA five high priority issues that we found to be acceptable and in some ways preferable to the way we initially asked for Planned Programs to be included.

They included the terms needed up front in the titles of their Planned Programs with a hyphen and then some extra words to more accurately describe the work under it. For example, they used the following titles:

- Climate Change - Water Quality & Quantity
- Climate Change - Home, Garden and Environment
- Childhood Obesity - Youth/Adult Obesity
- Global Food Security and Hunger - Agricultural Viability
- Global Food Security and Hunger - Integrated Pest Management
- Global Food Security and Hunger - Aquaculture

We found that as long as the title for the five NIFA priorities is up front on the title, we were able to aggregate the data we needed from the system to report out on these five priorities. This can be especially important for such a broad priority as Global Food Security and Hunger.

On Hatch and Evans-Allen Projects

All Hatch and Evans-Allen research projects are part of the Plan of Work and Annual Report. An effort is underway in the new REEport system to have some KA data and financial data linked to the Plan of Work and Annual Report. There have also been some questions about a requirement that every Experiment Station scientist have a Hatch or Evans-Allen project.

There is no legal requirement that every Experiment Station scientist have a Hatch or Evans-Allen research project.

There have also been some recurring problems with a few formula project initiations in CRIS not showing the relevance of the project to agricultural science. Every Hatch or Evans-Allen research project must have clear and documented relevance **as part of the project** to agricultural science. Thus, in your project initiations, relevance to agricultural science needs to be evident or explicit. Being explicit about the relevance to agricultural science makes the project easier to approve by the NIFA National Program Leaders.

National Outcomes and Indicators Workshop

NIFA will host a National Outcomes and Indicators Workshop at the Wyndham Riverfront Hotel in New Orleans, Louisiana on February 21 – 24, 2011. Approximately 55 Land-Grant University Extension and Research staff will be invited to this 2 ½ day workshop. Participants will include Directors / Associate Directors / Assistant Directors, State Program Leaders, and Evaluation Specialists. The workshop will also include ten NIFA National Program Leaders (NPLs). All five regions will be able to have one Research and one Extension representative on each of the five teams to keep them manageable. Plus there will be one evaluation specialist invited to participate on each team. There will also be two NIFA NPLs on each team to provide national leadership. Moreover, each team will have a facilitator who will not have input on the decision, but help bring the group to consensus. The ultimate goal of this workshop is

to come to consensus on and define two or more national outcomes and indicator measures (research and extension) and/or two or more regional outcomes and measures for each of the five NIFA priority areas which will then be reported in the Plan of Work and Annual Report of Accomplishments in the future. Thus, each team will focus on one of the NIFA priority areas.

Bart Hewitt, Accountability and Reporting Team Leader, will be coordinating with the ten Research and Extension Regional Executive Directors and with NIFA executives and National Program Leaders to identify participants for this workshop in the coming months.

Welcome New Plan of Work Staff

We would like to welcome Katelyn Sellers to the NIFA Accountability and Reporting Team in the Office of Planning and Accountability. Katelyn will have responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the Plan of Work and Annual Report process as well as providing other accountability and reporting analytical expertise. For Plan of Work issues, she can be reached at pow@nifa.usda.gov. Her phone number is 202-401-5482.

The Next Newsletter

If you have suggestions for the next Plan of Work newsletter please contact us at the e-mail address below. Past newsletters can be found at: http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/reporting/plan_rept/pow_newsletters.html.

For more information on the Plan of Work, e-mail the Plan of Work staff at pow@nifa.usda.gov, or call Katelyn Sellers, 202-401-5482.