

NIFA in the News – Week of April 25, 2011

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In the News

Inequality Rising in Rural and Urban America (Daily Yonder 4/21). Income inequality is increasing between counties in both rural and urban America. Income gains in richer counties are outpacing gains in poorer places. Meanwhile, there is growing evidence that inequality has a number of ill effects on society. Research provided by the Southern Rural Development Center. [Link](#)

USDA research grant targets feed efficiency (Ag Week 4/25). The sustainability of the beef industry continues to be an issue in agriculture today. Will the industry be able to survive high feed and land prices? A \$5 million USDA-NIFA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative grant has been awarded to a multidisciplinary group of researchers from eight institutions to develop DNA-based technology to predict genetic merit for feed efficiency. [Link](#)

Fed grant funds UA childhood obesity research (Arkansas News 4/25). A \$4.78 million federal grant is funding a multi-campus obesity intervention project involving University of Arkansas scientists and educators. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture announced the five-year grant, "Interventions for Obesity Prevention Targeting Young Children in At-Risk Environments: An Integrated Approach." The award was funded through the institute's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative competitive grants program. [Link](#)

UCD to tackle child obesity in Central Valley (The Davis Enterprise – CA 4/25). UC Davis professor Adela de la Torre, a national expert on Chicano and Latino health issues, received a five-year, \$4.8 million federal grant Monday to discover the best ways to help Mexican-heritage children in California maintain healthy weights... UCD was one of 24 institutions selected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture in a national competition for \$80 million in grants to address obesity in children ages 2 through 8. "We know that for our children to grow up and win the future, they need nutritious diets and healthy lifestyles that enable them to reach their fullest potential," said Roger Beachy, director of the

National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

Research aimed at preventing obesity (Brownfield Ag News 4/25) The federal government is investing in research to address childhood obesity. Roger Beachy, the director of USDA's Institute of Food and Agriculture, says research is aimed at very young children. "Two through six are the areas that social scientists and economists and nutritionists are convinced that we can have an impact," Beachy told reporters during a conference call Monday. Research will focus on reducing childhood obesity through diet and exercise, said Beachy. [Link](#)

S.C. State eyes cost of getting biofuel to pumps (The Times and Democrat 4/26). S.C. State University Industrial and Electrical Engineering Professor Jae-Dong Hong is leading a team of engineering and economics professors on a three-year \$449, 921 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute for Food and Agriculture to address this issue. Their proposed work is currently on display in Washington at the NIFA Waterfront Centre, where it will remain throughout the year. [Link](#)

USDA Funds University of Arkansas Obesity Interventions Project (Newswise 4/26). University of Arkansas scientists and educators will attack childhood obesity through a five-year, \$4.78 million a project funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The multi-campus project, "Interventions for Obesity Prevention Targeting Young Children in At-Risk Environments: An Integrated Approach," is funded through the National Institute of Food and Agriculture's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative competitive grants program. [Link](#)

College of Wooster plays role in crop research (Farm and Dairy 4/26). A national effort to protect one of the America's most-valued food crops will include two scientists from The College of Wooster. Dean Fraga and Bill Morgan, both professors of biology, biochemistry and molecular biology, will lend their expertise to a multidisciplinary team of researchers charged with creating new disease-management technologies to improve the sustainability of soybean production. The group, which includes representatives from 18 institutions, has received a \$9.28 million grant from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture to carry out the research. The recipients of the grant are Virginia Bioinformatics Institute and Virginia Tech's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, which will distribute funding to other members of the research team. [Link](#)

UC Davis professor wins \$4.8M obesity prevention grant (Sacramento Business Journal 4/26). A University of California Davis professor was awarded a \$4.8 million federal grant to find ways to help Mexican-heritage children to maintain healthy weights. UC Davis was one of 24 institutions to win obesity study grants through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

Short videos aim to get cooks to change their ways (R&D Magazine 4/26). "Ugly bugs" that can cause foodborne illness are in the spotlight as part of public service

announcements released by Cornell and distributed by the nonprofit Partnership for Food Safety Education (PFSE). The project was funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

\$5M To Research Feed Efficiency Genetics in Cattle (Prairie Farmer 4/27). A \$5 million USDA-NIFA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative grant has been awarded today to a multi-disciplinary group of researchers from eight institutions to answer that question. They hope the answer will come from DNA-based technology used to predict genetic merit for feed efficiency. [Link](#)

USDA taps MSU for three bioenergy, biobased product grants (Biofuels Digest 4/27). In Michigan, Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan visited Michigan State University today to highlight three new research grants awarded to the university to spur production of bioenergy and biobased products that will lead to the development of sustainable regional systems and help create jobs. The grants were NIFA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative. [Link](#)

WVU receives nearly \$5 million from USDA (West Virginia Public Broadcasting 4/27). WVU will use the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant to work with Monongalia and Kanawha County Schools and a company called 'Choosy Kids' to examine environmental and behavioral factors that promote childhood obesity. The Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Roger Beachy, said one goal is to develop strategies to encourage healthier eating and lifestyles, especially in younger children. [Link](#)

WVU receives \$4.7M grant (Charleston Daily Mail 4/27). WVU has received a multimilliondollar grant to study child obesity. On Tuesday, the university announced it received \$4.7 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The money will be used over five years. The study will focus on looking at home, school and environmental settings and determining nutrition and physical activity, lead researcher Susan Partington said. The basic premise is that if people live in unhealthy environments, they will be unhealthy. [Link](#)

WVU gets nearly \$5M for fight against life-shortening, statewide problem of childhood obesity (The Republic 4/27). West Virginia University is getting \$4.7 million to fight childhood obesity. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is providing the funding over five years for prevention strategies as part of a national campaign against obesity. [Link](#)

Virginia Tech researchers join in large soybean project (Southeast Farm Press 4/27). Making major improvements to one of the nation's high-value food crops — from the lab, to the field, to the market — is the goal of a project awarded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture to scientists at the Virginia Bioinformatics Institute and Virginia Tech's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. The \$9.28 million grant will fund the work of a multi-disciplinary team representing a total of 18 institutions that will create new disease management

technologies to improve the sustainability of soybean production. [Link](#)

Multi-Million Dollar USDA Grant Set to Help WVU Fight Obesity (WDTV 5 News-WV 4/27). WVU has received a multi-million dollar grant from the United States Department of Agriculture to combat childhood obesity. With about 15% of the state's high school students considered obese, the \$4.7 million grant is expected to help fight that. Officials say the plan is to assess the factors that contribute to obesity and its onset, and figure out what we can do to help our kids live healthier. With our kids being our future, we have to find ways to get them in better health. [Link](#)

UC-Davis Professor Receives Grant for Obesity Research (California Healthline 4/27). Adela de la Torre -- director of the UC-Davis Center for Transnational Health -- has won a five-year, \$4.8 million grant to study ways to combat obesity in children of Mexican heritage. The study will focus on about 800 children and their families in the Fresno County towns of Firebaugh and San Joaquin. UC-Davis was one of 24 institutions to receive grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to study obesity. [Link](#)

UC Davis professor receives grant for study of obesity in Latino children (Modesto Bee 4/27). A UC Davis professor has received a \$4.8 federal grant to find the best way to keep children of Mexican heritage trim. "More than four in every 10 children born to parents of Mexican heritage are overweight or obese," said University of California, Davis, professor Adela de la Torre, a national expert on Latino health issues. UC Davis was one of 24 institutions selected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in competition for \$80 million in grants to address obesity in children ages 2 through 8 years. [Link](#)

Penn State Biofuels Researchers Receive USDA Grants (Gant Daily 4/28). Three researchers in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences recently were awarded a total of more than \$2.8 million in Sustainable Bioenergy Grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Penn State was one of only four universities to get three of these grants, and no institution received more support from the program. [Link](#)

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