

## NIFA in the News – Week of May 16, 2011

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### In the News

**Supporting the next generation of agriculture (Western Farm Press 5/13).** All universities engage in research and teaching, but the nation's more than 100 land-grant colleges and universities, have a third critical mission—extension. "Extension" means "reaching out," and—along with teaching and research—land-grant institutions extend their resources, solving public needs with college or university resources through non-formal, non-credit programs. These programs are largely administered through thousands of county and regional extension offices, which bring land-grant expertise to the most local of levels. And both the universities and their local offices are supported by NIFA, the federal partner in the Cooperative Extension System (CES). [Link](#)

**USDA helps vets with student loans (San Angelo Standard Times 5/14).** For the third consecutive year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is offering incentives for rural large-animal veterinarians who will locate their practice where there is a shortage or no vet practitioners at all. The USDA is implementing a plan to address veterinary shortages throughout rural America by repaying the student loans of qualified veterinarians in return for their services in areas suffering from a lack of veterinarians. [Link](#)

**OSU maps barley genome in search of hardier crop (KVAL 5/16).** Oregon State University researchers, supported by a major new initiative to produce climate-change tolerant crops, are working on a hardier variety of barley that can be grown in frostier regions of the United States – and have improved yields and traits allowing growers and processors to become more competitive in the global market. The five-year grant comes from the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture and funds a national team of researchers, breeders and educators to identify genetic data and breed the wheat and barley varieties. [Link](#)

**ISU To Lead Alternative Hen-Housing Study (Wallaces Farmer 5/17).** Iowa State University researchers will join with University of California-Davis scientists to investigate alternative egg production systems to help improve animal welfare and other practices. The two-year research project is funded by a \$700,000 grant from USDA, through its Agriculture and Food

Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program. [Link](#)

**PhillyTreeMap.org: crowdsourced census of Philadelphia's tree canopy (Technically Philly 5/17).** Unveiled on Arbor Day during Philly Tech Week, PhillyTreeMap.org is a wiki-inspired web application that allows users who register free to collaborate with the project partners — City of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission – to map, inventory and preserve the Philadelphia urban forest. The project was built by local mapping company Azavea. The development of PhillyTreeMap was supported by a Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) award from the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture.” [Link](#)

**Food system project battles food insecurity in Northeast (ECM 5/17).** Cornell researchers are playing a central role in a \$5 million project to determine whether greater reliance on regionally produced foods could improve food access and affordability for disadvantaged communities, as well as strengthen economies and benefit farmers and others in the food supply chain. The "Enhancing Northeastern Food Security with Regional Food Systems" project was funded in April for five years by the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, administered through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The team includes researchers from 12 institutions in the Northeast, including Cornell, and is led by Stephan Goetz of Pennsylvania State University. [Link](#)

**Nationwide Partnership Seeks to Halve Honeybee Losses (Environment News Service 5/19).** A new nationwide network to monitor and maintain honeybee health is being created by the Bee Informed Partnership. Their goal is to help honeybees to recover from assaults such as mites, fungi, pesticides, competition by alien species, the disappearance of flowering plants, air pollution and climate change that have caused bee colonies to collapse not only across the United States but around the world. The five-year, \$5 million program led by Pennsylvania State University received notice on Tuesday that it is being funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

**Penn State leading nationwide bee monitoring network (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette 5/20).** Penn State University bee experts will lead a nationwide network to monitor and maintain honeybee health with the formation of the Bee Informed Partnership, a five-year, \$5 million program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

**Food system project battles food insecurity in Northeast (R&D Magazine 5/21).** Cornell researchers are playing a central role in a \$5 million project to determine whether greater reliance on regionally produced foods could improve food access and affordability for disadvantaged communities, as well as strengthen economies and benefit farmers and others in the food supply chain. The "Enhancing Northeastern Food Security with Regional Food Systems" project was funded in April for five years by the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, administered through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The team includes researchers from 12 institutions in the Northeast, including Cornell, and is led by Stephan Goetz of Pennsylvania State University. [Link](#)

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