

## NIFA in the News – Week of June 27, 2011

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### In the News

**\$42 million in grants go to food safety (The Packer 6/24).** The National Institute of Food and Agriculture is giving extension grants totaling almost \$42 million to 24 institutions for projects aimed at reducing foodborne illnesses and deaths from microbial contamination. Many of the projects funded by the institute, which is a part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, involve fresh produce such as tomatoes, spinach, lettuce and other leafy greens, according to a news release. [Link](#)

**Wide range of food safety grants announced (Meat and Poultry 6/24).** Food safety research grants totaling approximately \$42 million were announced June 23 by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture of the US Department of Agriculture. Focused principally on proteins and produce projects rather than grains, the grants were made to 24 different institutions. [Link](#)

**USDA aims to reduce food-borne illnesses (Western Farm Press 6/24).** The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) has awarded research, education and extension grants to 24 institutions to reduce food-borne illnesses and deaths from microbial contamination. "While the U.S. food supply is generally considered to be one of the safest in the world, approximately 48 million Americans become sick each year due to food-borne illnesses," said Catherine Woteki, USDA Chief Scientist and Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics. "These grants support the development of a more complete understanding of the sources and implications of microbial contamination and will promote the adoption of new food safety strategies and technologies. The goal is to greatly improve the safety of our food supply and ultimately save lives." [Link](#)

**UOG scientist wins USDA competitive funding (First Science 6/24).** Western Pacific Tropical Research Center (WPTRC) scientist Dr. Gadi V.P. Reddy is concerned about the effect of toxic agricultural chemicals on the health of island residents and ecosystems. He has been

educating farmers on the alternatives to pesticide use and has recently been awarded an \$188,000 grant from USDA-National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA) Pest Management Alternatives Program (PMAP). Dr. Monte P. Johnson, National Program Leader with USDA-NIFA congratulated Dr. Reddy on his award saying, "Competition was tough." [Link](#)

**A crowning blow to carbon balance in northern Arizona (Arizona Daily Sun 6/25).** Charred logs, standing dead tree trunks and decaying branches mark the site of the 1996 Hochderffer fire, a crown fire that burned 16,000 acres west of the San Francisco Peaks. Across Highway 180, the story is much the same. NAU School of Forestry professor and tree physiologist Dr. Tom Kolb is calculating the amount of carbon dioxide moving between the land and the air at the site of the Horseshoe Fire. This 8,000-acre crown fire also burned in 1996. Above the rotting logs, carbon dioxide is flowing through claw-like fingers of a device called an eddy covariance system. Funded by a U.S. Department of Agriculture National Research Initiative grant, Kolb is measuring gases being released from deforested and forested sites. [Link](#)

**USDA-Funded Research Aims to Reduce Food-Borne Illnesses (Growing Georgia 6/26).** The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) has awarded research, education and extension grants to 24 institutions to reduce food-borne illnesses and deaths from microbial contamination. [Link](#)

**1890 program awards \$1.5M in research grants (The Times and Democrat 6/26).** South Carolina State University's 1890 Research and Extension Program has awarded \$1.5 million in grants to fund research in everything from childhood obesity to livestock emergency response. Funding for the projects is administered through 1890 Research's Evans-Allen research program. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture, an agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture, funds the Evans-Allen research programs at the 18 higher education institutions that form the 1890 Land-Grant System. [Link](#)

**USDA Funds Research to Reduce Foodborne Illness (Food Safety News 6/27).** Why do cattle shed more harmful E. coli bacteria during summer months? Is there really a greater risk of contracting trichinosis from pigs raised outdoors? These are some of the questions researchers will try to answer in government-sponsored studies. Twenty-four research, education and extension grants, awarded last week by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) aim to reduce foodborne illnesses and deaths from microbial contamination. [Link](#)

**Agriculture colleges, extension get budget squeeze (AP 6/27).** As university budgets take a beating across the country, agricultural schools and extension programs are feeling the impact. Much federal support for these programs flows through the National Institute for Food and Agriculture, which took a 9 percent cut this fiscal year. Extension supporters largely beat back a House-passed \$30 million cut in a key category of federal matching funds within NIFA that supports salaries for a wide range of extension services, from county agents to 4-H. But a fiscal 2012 funding bill that passed the GOP-controlled House this month cuts \$35 million in those extension funds from the current level of \$294 million. The Democratic-controlled Senate has yet to act. [Link](#)

**Tight job market squeezes large-animal veterinarians (VIN News Service 6/27).** Vermont discovered the distinction between demand and need when it set out to identify which of its

communities should be designated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as short on food-supply veterinarians. Under a USDA program launched last year, veterinarians who apply and are approved to practice in designated shortage areas for three years may have up to \$75,000 of their educational debt paid by the government. Dr. Gary Sherman, national program leader for veterinary science at the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, which administers the federal Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program, acknowledged that veterinarians with some experience are likelier than brand-new graduates to be successful in some under-served areas. [Link](#)

**USDA-Funded Research Aims to Reduce Food-Borne Illnesses (Food Ingredients First 6/27).**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA), National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) has awarded research, education and extension grants to 24 institutions to reduce food-borne illnesses and deaths from microbial contamination. [Link](#)

**UAF research team, colleagues to look at linking fisheries with schools (AP 6/27).**

A University of Alaska Fairbanks research team is studying ways to connect fisheries and processors with rural schools. The Center for Alaska Native Health Research has received a three-year, \$1.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the study, which also will look at opportunities for nutrition education. The study will focus on the Yukon-Kuskokwim delta region. [Link](#)

**The Tea Spot Applies For \$460,000 Small Business Innovation Research Grant (Daily Markets 6/28).**

The Tea Spot has submitted a proposal for a competitive Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant to the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), the cooperative research agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The \$460,000 Phase II SBIR grant would be for marketing research in support of the distribution of a compostable tea filter for to-go loose leaf tea in mass-foodservice. [Link](#)

**Grant to Help Farmers Deal With Climate Changes (Inside Indiana Business 6/28).** Purdue University researchers will get a \$5 million grant to develop decision-support tools to help corn and soybean growers adapt their practices to changes in climate. Linda Prokopy, an associate professor of forestry and natural resources, will lead researchers affiliated with the Purdue Climate Change Research Center in the five-year project. The research is funded by the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

**Iowa State animal scientists to study heat stress in poultry (World Poultry 6/29).** Iowa State University animal scientists are collaborating on a study of poultry genetics and management to help chickens deal with increased heat. A \$4.7 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) is funding the five-year project. Carl Schmidt, associate professor at the University of Delaware, leads the study with scientists from Iowa State, North Carolina State University, the University of Liverpool and Hy-Line International, based in Iowa. [Link](#)

**Grant Will Help Farmers Deal With Changes to Climates (Western Farmer-Stockman 6/29).**

The USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, through the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative is providing Purdue University researchers \$5 million to develop decision-support tools to help corn and soybean growers adapt their practices to changes in climate.

[Link](#)

**Purdue awarded grant that aims at putting climate data to work (Journal and Courier 6/29).** Purdue University has been awarded a \$5 million grant to transform historical weather data into climate modeling tools for farmers. The tools are intended to help farmers and other agriculture decision-makers create long-term plans on what, when and where to plant crops and how to manage them. The five-year project is funded by the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and involves nine other universities. [Link](#)

**Purdue wins \$5M global warming crop-research grant (Indianapolis Business Journal 6/29).** Purdue University scientists have won a \$5 million federal grant to help corn and soybean farmers adapt to the various climate change scenarios global warming is forecast to bring in the coming decades. The five-year project funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture will enlist researchers at the Purdue Climate Change Research Center. Associate professor of forestry and natural resources Linda Prokopy says the team will initially focus on developing models to predict how different climate scenarios would affect corn and soybean growth and profits in 12 states stretching from the Dakotas to Ohio. She says the second phase will focus on how best to deliver that information to crop producers in a form "that's useful" to them. [Link](#)

**Is the rural food practice shortage alleviated? (AVMA 6/29).** An association of cattle veterinarians says the U.S. no longer has a shortage of veterinarians willing to work in private rural food supply practice. The USDA gave loan repayments to 53 veterinarians during the 2010 fiscal year through the program, according to Jennifer Martin, a spokeswoman for the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Funding decisions had not been made for the fiscal year starting Oct. 1, but 220 shortage areas have been designated. Asked if NIFA has an opinion as to whether the U.S. has a shortage of veterinarians in rural food animal practice, Martin said state animal health officials continue sending nominations for shortage areas, and NIFA respects their expert opinions. [Link](#)

**NIFA Funding Will Help Corn and Soybean Growers (Farm Futures 6/29).** The USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, through the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative is providing Purdue University researchers \$5 million to develop decision-support tools to help corn and soybean growers adapt their practices to changes in climate. [Link](#)

**A Different Kind of Mentor (Newswise 6/30).** An ementoring program was designed in 2002 for first-time freshmen in animal science, conducted within a required freshmen orientation course at Texas A&M University-Kingsville. Alumni and professional contacts of the instructor employed in USDA agencies, industry, and organizations were recruited to serve as ementors. For this study, a variety of mentors were chosen, ranging from young professionals to more experienced individuals. Students and ementors completed online training to better understand what to expect from the program, and how to get the most from their online relationship. This program was funded in part by Pioneer Hi-Bred International, a DuPont Company; and a USDA-CSREES Hispanic-Serving Institutions Grant. [Link](#)

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