

NIFA in the News – Week of December 12, 2011

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In the News

USDA Doles Out \$10.4 Million in Food Safety Grants (Food Safety News 12/9). Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan announced Wednesday that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has awarded 17 grants in 13 states to improve the safety of the food supply through research, education and extension. USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) awarded the grants, totaling \$10.4 million, to universities to help address a broad spectrum of food safety issues. Merrigan made the announcement at Michigan State University, which was awarded three grants under the program. [Link](#)

USDA Awards Grants to Universities to Improve Food Safety (National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition 12/9). On Wednesday, December 7, Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan announced 17 grants to universities in 13 states to improve the safety of our food supply through research, education, and extension in a number of areas. A total of \$10.4 million was awarded by USDA's National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA) through the National Integrated Food Safety Initiative (NIFSI). [Link](#)

MSU gets food-safety research grants (AP/Traverse City Record-Eagle 12/10). The U.S. Department of Agriculture will award 17 grants totaling \$10.4 million for university research projects designed to boost food safety at a time when millions of Americans get food-borne illnesses each year. The funds are being divided among universities in 13 states, Deputy Agriculture Secretary Kathleen Merrigan said this week during a visit to Michigan State University, a recipient of three grants. [Link](#)

MSU professor receives food safety grant (Battle Creek Enquirer 12/10). A few years ago, Elliot Ryser and his colleagues put 20 pounds of E. coli-tainted radicchio through a commercial slicing machine along with untainted iceberg lettuce... USDA Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan, who came to campus on Wednesday to announce the grants, framed them as part of a strong push on food safety issues begun

by President Barack Obama in the first months of his presidency. [Link](#)

Penn State Works on Egg Safety (Essential Public Radio 90.5).

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has awarded Pennsylvania State University a \$542,607 grant to improve food safety. The USDA handed out \$10.4 million in grants to 17 universities for research and education. Penn State researchers will be working with Iowa State University to develop an updated and optimized Egg Quality Assurance Program that will reduce *Salmonella* Enteritidis contamination of egg shells. [Link](#)

UC Davis to lead \$14 million effort to boost Afghanistan's agricultural extension (Western Farm Press/UC Davis News 12/13).

The University of California, Davis, has received \$14 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to lead a consortium of universities that will help Afghanistan strengthen its agricultural extension system and stabilize its agriculture-based economy. The new three-year grant, awarded by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, is part of a broad effort to empower the government and strengthen development in Afghanistan, where agriculture employs more than 80 percent of the labor force and generates more than 40 percent of the country's economic output. Approximately \$5 million of the grant will be used to support UC Davis-based work. The remainder will be awarded as subcontracts to extension professionals at Purdue University and Washington State University. Other land grant universities will be engaged as the project moves forward. [Link](#)

Penn State Working on Egg Safety (The Poultry Site 12/14).

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has awarded Pennsylvania State University a \$542,607 grant to improve food safety. The USDA handed out \$10.4 million in grants to 17 universities for research and education. Penn State researchers will be working with Iowa State University to develop an updated and optimized Egg Quality Assurance Programme that will reduce *Salmonella* Enteritidis contamination of egg shells. *Salmonella* Enteritidis is one of the two most common types of *Salmonella*. It can live inside normal-looking eggs, and when eaten raw, the bacterium causes illness. Symptoms include vomiting, abdominal cramps, and diarrhea. The illness usually lasts 4-7 days and most people recover without antibiotic treatment. [Link](#)

Deep federal spending cuts to animal programs avoided, for now (JAVMA

12/14). President Obama signed a \$182 billion appropriations package Nov. 18 that provides for animal health and welfare programs, agriculture and wildlife research, livestock production, and food safety in fiscal year 2012. Of particular interest to AVMA members is funding for selected USDA agencies that includes \$1.094 billion for the Agricultural Research Service, \$1 billion for the Food Safety and Inspection Service, \$816.5 million for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and \$705.6 million for the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

MSU awarded grant for organic sheep research (Agri-View 12/15). Montana State University (MSU) has received almost \$743,000 to research the use of sheep in

organic farming, incorporate those findings into MSU courses and share the discoveries with Montana producers and growers. The three-year grant announced Oct. 25 by U.S. Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan was one of 23 awarded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture in 18 states. The grants totaling \$19 million were given through two programs-the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative and the Organic Transitions Program. [Link](#)

USDA awards food safety grants to universities (High Plains Journal 12/16).

Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Kathleen Merrigan visited Michigan State University recently to announce that USDA has awarded 17 grants to improve the safety of the food supply in the United States through research, education and extension. USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture awarded the grants, totaling \$10.4 million, to universities in 13 states to help address a broad spectrum of food safety issues. Michigan State University was awarded three grants in total. [Link](#)

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