

Stakeholder Feedback for the AFRI Sustainable Bioenergy and Bioproducts Challenge Area

AFRI Stakeholder Input

The programs described herein were developed within the context of the authorized purposes of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) research, extension, and education projects and activities. In addition, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) obtains input from Congress; the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board (NAREEEAB); and many university, scientific, and agricultural committees and organizations. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) developed a stakeholder's Web page (www.nifa.usda.gov/business/reporting/stakeholder.html) to document stakeholder input that is considered when developing and updating program area descriptions and priorities each year.

Stakeholders provided the following input for the Sustainable Bioenergy and Bioproducts Challenge Area through a variety of meetings and workshops:

- Develop and implement programs to promote the use of an integrated systems approach that will facilitate the development of emerging biomass supply chains that lead to biobased fuels, chemicals, and products;
- Develop and implement programs that promote the development of new technologies that are relevant to existing, emerging, or future biomass supply chains;
- Promote public and private collaboration to overcome barriers and accelerate deployment of biofuels and biobased products;
- Develop a workforce for the future bioeconomy; and
- Understand and inform policy.

Through the AFRI Sustainable Bioenergy and Bioproducts Challenge Area, NIFA has grown support for these recommendations over the past five years, and now again in FY2016. This challenge area has invested heavily in regional biomass feedstock and biofuel and bioproducts systems using Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP) grants that promote an integrated systems approach and the collaborative unique resources and capacities of public-private partnerships made up of academic, industrial, government, and non-governmental partners. To date, seven of these projects are active and NIFA intends to support additional CAP grants in the future. Within the CAP grants, technology and analytic tools are developed or augmented to address specific barriers and data needs, including sustainability analysis. Certain analyses and data sets will be useful for informing current and future policy. Each CAP grant has robust education and outreach activities to raise public energy literacy, create programs and curricula to train the emerging workforce, transfer technology to industrial producers and processors, and promote community engagement from the start of these projects. In addition to the CAP grant efforts, this challenge area supports other programs specifically aimed at education, workforce development, and inclusion of diverse communities and individuals.

Sources of Stakeholder Input:

- Each of the seven Regional Bioenergy System CAP grants has its own external advisory board that help direct activities of the projects. Collectively, this involves more than 100 stakeholders, from academia, government researchers, and policy managers to

environmental and education non-governmental organizations. Industry advisory board representatives cover the entire supply chain, including producers (e.g., farmers and forest managers); equipment, automobile, and aircraft manufacturers; logistics specialists; processors; and end-users (e.g., airlines). This input is channeled to NIFA and the Bioenergy, Biobased Product, and Bioeconomy (B3) Portfolio through annual reports, professional publications, and face-to-face meetings (see <https://nararenewables.org/>, <http://hardwoodbiofuels.org/>, http://www.lsuagcenter.com/topics/crops/bioenergy/biofuels_bioprocessing/subi, <http://www.se-ibss.org/>, <https://cenusa.iastate.edu/>, <http://www.newbio.psu.edu/>, <http://banr.nrel.colostate.edu/>).

- Each of the seven NIFA Regional Bioenergy System CAP grants has a robust outreach program to producers, landowners, and communities. Stakeholder input from these activities provides guidance for each project and informs the broader B3 Portfolio enterprise.
- The NIFA B3 Portfolio holds a project directors' meeting every year where dedicated sessions focus on the current and future direction of the program. The meeting involves approximately 120 stakeholders per year.
- The NIFA B3 Portfolio is a key component of a larger Federal enterprise with many plans that funnel federal and stakeholder information to the NIFA program. These include Growing America's Fuel (https://www.whitehouse.gov/.../growing_americas_fuels.pdf); the President's Interagency Biofuels Strategic Plan; the Biomass Research and Development Board Reports (<http://www.biomassboard.gov/board/materials.html>), which includes the Federal Activities Report on the Bioeconomy, released in February, 2016; and the Federal Alternative Jet Fuel Research Strategic Plan, to be released soon by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.
- NAREEEAB (<https://nareeeab.ree.usda.gov/>) provides advice to the Secretary of Agriculture and land-grant colleges and universities on top priorities and policies for food and agricultural research, education, extension, and economics. The board is made up of 25 members, each of which represents a specific category of U.S. agricultural stakeholders, as mandated by Congress.
- The NIFA B3 Portfolio leverages stakeholder input from partner agencies, especially USDA's Agricultural Research Service (<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Aboutus/docs.htm?docid=1415>) and the U.S. Department of Energy Bioenergy Technologies Office (BETO, <http://www.energy.gov/eere/transportation/bioenergy>).
- The USDA Strategic Plan www.ocfo.usda.gov/usdasp/sp2010/sp2010.pdf.