

Higher Education Challenge Grants

Critical funding increase needed for CSREES program that promotes excellence in food and agricultural sciences education.

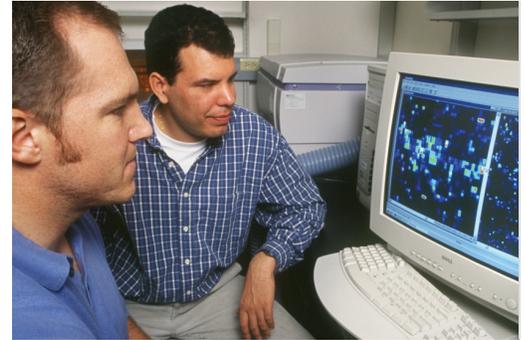
The U.S. Department of Agriculture has been designated by Congress as the lead federal agency for food and agricultural sciences education, with this responsibility delegated to the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES). To strengthen and enhance America's higher education teaching and training programs, CSREES administers the competitively-awarded and peer-reviewed Higher Education Challenge (HEC) Grants Program.

The HEC program funds innovative teaching enhancement projects with the potential for regional or national impact to serve as models for other institutions at America's land-grant universities and related institutions. By enhancing teaching, the HEC Program seeks to attain two goals:

- Increase the number of graduates with a baccalaureate (or higher) degree in the food and agricultural sciences.
- Improve the quality of postsecondary instruction within these disciplines.

HEC-supported projects must have a positive impact on large numbers of students and achieve cost effective economies of scale in meeting the two HEC program goals. They must also have broad-based applicability beyond a single course, an individual instructor, or department. Projects involving several universities are encouraged.

The HEC program has been level-funded since FY 2005. Congress must address this situation by providing a significant increase when it considers the FY 2009 Agriculture Appropriations bill. America's food and agriculture industries face a critical deficiency of trained personnel and the HEC program is explicitly designed to ease this shortage.



The HEC program trains society-ready graduates in areas of critical need, including:

- Helping American producers compete more effectively in global agricultural businesses, markets, and trade.
- Developing new biofuels and bio-based products and technologies.
- Protecting animal and plant health, including improved biosecurity or genomics.
- Promoting human sciences that address rural youth, individual, and family well-being in a community context.
- Increasing food safety and food defense and protecting America's food supply.
- Supporting healthy food choices and lifestyles, and obesity prevention.
- Sustaining forest and rangeland health and protection, including improved soil, air, and water quality.



NASULGC'S PRIORITY REQUEST FOR FY 2009

- Higher Education Challenge Grants..... \$6.995 M

NASULGC, A Public University Association, represents 217 U.S. universities and has members in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories.

Higher Education Challenge Grants

Appropriations Bill	Agriculture
Agency	Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (USDA)
Account	Research and Education Activities
Project (Program) Name	Higher Education Challenge Grants

Requested Amount **\$6,695,000**

Authorization	7 U.S.C. 3152(b) (1), (Sec. 1417, National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977.)
Description	This CSREES program provides competitive grants to support innovation in food and agricultural sciences teaching methods and materials.
Benefits / Impacts Justification / Explanation	<p>The HEC program funds innovative teaching and learning enhancement projects with the potential for regional or national impact to serve as models for other American land-, sea-, space- and sun-grant universities and related institutions.</p> <p>The HEC program trains society-ready graduates who then:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Help American producers and processors compete more effectively in global agricultural markets, while maintaining a stewardship of our resources. ■ Develop new biofuels and bio-based products and technologies that improve yield and nutrition with a favorable economic impact. ■ Protect animal and plant health, important concerns for both biosecurity and human public health. ■ Address concerns about rural youth, individuals, and family well-being in a community context. ■ Protect America's food supply by increasing food safety and food defense expertise. ■ Provide more nutritious plant and animal products and help individuals and families make healthy food choices and lifestyles. ■ Sustain forest, rangeland, ground water and aquifer health and protection, resulting in improved soil, air and water quality.

Funding History

FY 2009 (President's Budget)	FY 2008	FY 2007	FY 2006	FY 2005	FY 2004
\$6,695,000	\$5,385,000	\$5,423,000	\$5,423,000	\$5,456,000	\$4,859,000

Misc. Information

Matching Funds	Grant recipients are required to provide a dollar-for-dollar match.
Final Recipients	Land-Grant and other universities with the capacity to teach food and agricultural sciences.
Note for Senate Offices	Funding is <u>not</u> being requested for this program through another appropriations bill.

Additional Information > www.nasulgc-bac.com/kb.htm