

# APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

## Agriculture and Food Research Initiative

*Enhanced funding needed to sustain bio-feedstock production, understand agricultural implications of climate change, create stronger nutrition education programs, and assure a well-educated agricultural workforce.*

Congress has long recognized the critical role that appropriations play in advancing basic and applied research in many different scientific disciplines. That is why, for example, funding for human health and medical research has increased tremendously in recent decades, with appropriations for research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) growing by more than 700 percent since 1970!

As part of Title VII of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (the 2008 Farm Bill), Congress established a new agency — the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) — to elevate the extramural food and agricultural research, education, and extension programs sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to levels commensurate with other federal grant-making agencies, such as the NIH and the National Science Foundation (NSF).

The flagship competitive grants program at NIFA, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) — previously known as the National Research Initiative (NRI) — has received modest funding increases in recent years. However, the FY 2009 appropriation for AFRI was only \$201.5 million, which is less than 26 states each received in funding from NIH in FY 2007.

**More importantly, USDA reports that it had to reject — solely on the basis of funding constraints — 78% of the meritorious NRI proposals it received and peer-reviewed in FY 2007 and 84% in FY 2006. To provide critical competitive research, education, and extension funding to address pressing national issues, AFRI must receive no less than \$300 million in FY 2010.**

Some key priorities needing immediate attention through greatly enhanced AFRI funding include:

**BIOPRODUCTS.** The U.S. has adopted policies promoting the production of renewable fuels (such as ethanol and biodiesel) and other bioproducts to improve national energy security and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. As the use of bioproducts increases, there is a pressing need for additional funding to assess the effects on water use, soil fertility, and related environmental conditions. Additional economic analyses are also needed to better understand how food, feed, and fuel prices are interrelated.



A.P.L.U. PRIORITY REQUEST FOR FY 2010

Agriculture & Food Research Initiative.....\$300 M

**CLIMATE CHANGE.** A warmer planet will affect farms, ranches, and forests in many ways (water availability, pest damage, severe weather variability, etc.). To respond to changed climatic conditions, research funding must be greatly expanded and graduates of land-grant universities must receive enhanced and updated academic and practical training so that they obtain the requisite skills to help society cope with global climate change.

**HUMAN NUTRITION.** As the U.S. struggles with the twin epidemics of obesity and diabetes, expanded research is critically needed to help understand the community and behavioral attributes of human nutrition. Such research will lead directly to more scientifically informed nutrition education and guidance programs delivered through the Cooperative Extension System.

**AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE.** There is an urgent need to educate and support more young men and women — especially from diverse backgrounds and ethnic communities — to conduct agricultural research and outreach, to serve the nation as farmers, foresters, ranchers, and bioenergy producers, and to lead public and private sector organizations in the 21st century.

For additional information see page two  
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# Agriculture and Food Research Initiative

<b>Appropriations Bill</b>	Agriculture				
<b>Agency</b>	National Institute of Food and Agriculture (formerly Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service)				
<b>Account</b>	Research and Education Activities				
<b>Program Name</b>	Agriculture and Food Research Initiative				
<b>Requested Amount</b>	<b>\$300,000,000</b>				
<b>Authorization</b>	7 U.S.C. 450i(b), (National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977).				
<b>Description</b>	<p>This program provides peer-reviewed, competitively-awarded grants to support: (1) high priority fundamental and mission-linked research of importance in the biological, environmental, physical, and social sciences relevant to agriculture, food, the environment, and rural communities; and (2) competitively awarded research, extension, and education grants addressing key issues of national and regional importance to agriculture, forestry, and related topics.</p>				
<b>Benefits/Impacts</b>	<p>The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative is NIFA's flagship competitive grants program. It benefits the nation in numerous ways, providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ America's farmers and foresters with the genomic data and biotechnology tools to expand food and fiber production, processing, and international trade.</li> <li>■ U.S. healthcare professionals with insight into the relationships between diet and health.</li> <li>■ Extension specialists and their clients expanded knowledge about water quality to help protect the environment and safeguard our food systems.</li> <li>■ University educators with the funding to train new generations of food, agriculture, and natural resource scientists.</li> </ul> <p>USDA reports that it had to reject — solely on the basis of funding constraints — 78% of the meritorious AFRI proposals it received and peer-reviewed in FY 2007 and 84% in FY 2006.</p>				
<b>Funding History</b>					
<b>FY 2010 President's Budget</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>	<b>FY 2008</b>	<b>FY 2007</b>	<b>FY 2006</b>	<b>FY 2005</b>
\$201,504,000	\$201,504,000	\$ 190,883,000	\$ 190,229,000	\$ 181,170,000	\$179,552,000
<b>Misc. Information</b>					
<b>Matching Funds</b>	There is no matching requirement.				
<b>Final Recipients</b>	1862, 1890, and 1994 land-grant institutions; other universities; government agencies; and a wide variety of other eligible recipients.				
<b>Note for Senate Offices</b>	Funding is not being requested for this program through another appropriations bill.				
<b>Additional Information</b>	<a href="http://www.land-grant.org/kb.htm">www.land-grant.org/kb.htm</a>				

The Association of Public and Land-grant Universities represents 217 U.S. universities and has members in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories.