

# **Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Competitive Grants Program**

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## **FY 2009 Request for Applications**

**Request for Determination Deadline: October 16, 2008**

**Application Deadline: December 12, 2008**



**U.S. Department of Agriculture**



**Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service**

**COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE;  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**OUTREACH AND ASSISTANCE FOR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS  
AND RANCHERS COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM**

**INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

**CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE:** This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under number 10.443, Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Competitive Grants Programs.

**DATES:** Applications must be received by Grants.gov by close of business (COB) on December 12, 2008 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding. Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable. Requests for Determination must be received by COB October 16, 2008 (see Part III, A., 2. for details).

**STAKEHOLDER INPUT:** The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is requesting comments regarding this RFA from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the program. Such comments will be used to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current RFA from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education, and extension for use in formulating future RFAs for competitive programs. Comments should be submitted as provided for in the DATES portion of this RFA.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy and Oversight Branch; Office of Extramural Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; USDA; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: [RFP-OEP@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:RFP-OEP@csrees.usda.gov). This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms. In your comments, please state that you are responding to the Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Competitive Grants Program RFA.

The Competitive Programs staff utilizes the input of diverse stakeholder groups to develop program descriptions that will solicit the highest-quality applications to meet the needs of U.S. agriculture, food, forestry, the environment, and rural communities. Setting program priorities is an important means of facilitating the scientific and technological advances needed to meet the challenges facing U.S. agriculture. Program priorities are developed using several criteria, including 1) mission relevance; 2) scientific opportunity; 3) impact to science and society; 4) linkages to other Federal programs; and 5) stakeholder input. The CSREES stakeholder Web page can be viewed at [www.csrees.usda.gov/business/reporting/stakeholder.html](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/reporting/stakeholder.html).

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** CSREES requests applications for the Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Competitive Grants Program (OASDFR). This program provides outreach and technical assistance to encourage and assist socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to own and operate farms and ranches and to participate equitably in agriculture programs. CSREES anticipates that approximately \$14.3 million will be available in fiscal year (FY) 2009 to support this program.

This notice identifies the objectives for OASDFR projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for an OASDFR grant. CSREES additionally requests stakeholder input from any interested party for use in the development of the next RFA for this program.

# IMPORTANT CHANGES TO THE FY 2009 OASDFR PROGRAM SOLICITATION

## \*\*\*\*\* PLEASE READ \*\*\*\*\*

### Electronic Application Submission Required:

In FY 2009, OASDFR will only accept electronic application submissions through Grants.gov. Be aware that additional time is required to complete the electronic application process. Applications must be submitted via [Grants.gov](http://grants.gov) by Close of Business (COB), 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, on December 12, 2008. Applications received after the applicable deadline will normally not be considered for funding. Information about submitting an application using Grants.gov can be found in Part IV.

**Note the attachment requirements (e.g., portable document format) in Part III section 3. of the Guide. ANY PROPOSALS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM CSREES REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from CSREES review. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business on the closing date in the RFA.**

If you do not own PDF-generating software, Grants.gov provides online tools to assist applicants. Users will find a link to “Convert Documents to PDF” on (<http://grants.gov/assets/PDFConversion.pdf>).

Helpful Submission Information	Website Address
Information pertaining to the transition to electronic submission can be found at the CSREES website.	<a href="http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/electronic">www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/electronic</a> This page will be updated frequently and should be checked for program-specific help.
Applications for this grant program should be submitted through the Grants.gov website.	To access the electronic application via Grants.gov, go to <a href="http://www.grants.gov">www.grants.gov</a> , under the “Apply for Grants” heading on the left side of page and click on “Download a Grant Application Package.” Enter the CFDA number 10.443 in the appropriate box to search by Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number.
<b>The CSREES GRANTS.GOV Application Guide provides guidance for completing the forms required by Grants.gov and CSREES. Used in conjunction with this RFA for the HEC grants program, this guide will assist applicants with most field-specific questions.</b>	<b>Each applicant should use the CSREES document titled, “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov” also known as the “CSREES Application Guide,” that is part of this RFA package located at Grants.gov. This document provides guidance for completing the required forms at Grants.gov.</b>  <b>Applicants should also reference the RFA for additional guidance not found in the application guide.</b>

If you have any questions related to preparing an application for electronic submission, contact:

Email: [electronic@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:electronic@csrees.usda.gov)

Phone: 202-401-5048, Business hours are M-F, 7:00 am – 5:00 pm ET.

If you have any questions related to Grants.gov, contact:

Email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726, Business hours are M-F, 7:00 am – 9:00 pm ET, excluding Federal holidays.

### **Budget Restrictions Require Strict Adherence to Funding Limits:**

OASDFR has mandatory funding limits for all applications. **Applications requesting budgets exceeding the funding limit for the program will be at risk of being excluded from CSREES review.** Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the entire RFA and contact Dr. Dionne Toombs, National Program Leader, for additional information on the program (see Part VII).

### **Annual Project Directors Meeting:**

If a project is funded, the Project Director will be required to attend an annual Project Directors meeting each year for the duration of the award. Reasonable travel expenses should be included as part of the project budget.

### **Multiple Submissions:**

In FY 2009, the OASDFR Program encourages that applicants submit one comprehensive application rather than multiple applications.

### **Evaluation Criteria:**

Please review the evaluation criteria located in Part V, B, of the RFA.

### **Electronic Subscription to OASDFR Announcements:**

If you would like to receive notifications of all new announcements pertaining to the OASDRF RFA, you can register via Grants.gov at <http://www.grants.gov/search/subscribeAdvanced.do>.

- Enter the e-mail address at which you would like to receive the announcements
- Enter “10.443” for CFDA Number
- Select “Subscribe to Mailing List”

Other criteria may be selected; however, your e-mail address and the CFDA number are the only data required to receive OASDFR announcements. You do not need to be a registered user of Grants.gov to use this service. You may modify your email subscriptions or unsubscribe at any time.

## **Farm Bill Changes:**

### **Eligibility:**

Section 2501(e)(5)(A)(ii) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(e)(5)(A)(ii)) is amended by striking “work with socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers during the 2-year period” and inserting “work with, and on behalf of, socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers during the 3-year period”. This means to be eligible and receive funding, an applicant will have to now meet the criteria.

### **Legislative Authority:**

The legislative authority for the program has changed. The outreach and technical assistance provided “shall be used exclusively” to:

- (1) enhance coordination of the outreach, technical assistance, and education efforts authorized under agriculture programs; and
- (2) to assist the Secretary in (i) reaching current and prospective socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers in a linguistically appropriate manner; and (ii) improving the participation of those farmers and ranchers in Department programs.

### **Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements:**

Grantees are required to submit annual reports that document outputs {significant activities (including dissemination activities), events, services or products} that contribute toward achieving the goals and objectives of the project. The reports should also include outcomes/impacts (a change in knowledge, actions or conditions) such as participation in USDA programs, changes in participant household income, local and regional impacts, coordination with USDA research and other activities, changes in delinquencies and/or foreclosure rates within the Farm Service Agency programs and other outcomes/impacts that demonstrate improvement of socially disadvantaged producers' operations. See Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements (see Part VI, D).

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## **PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

### **A. Legislative Authority and Background**

Section 14004 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA) (P.L. 110-246) amended Section 2501(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, Pub. L. 101-624, November 28, 1990, (7 U.S.C. 2279(a)) which authorizes the Secretary to make grants to eligible institutions and organizations so that they may provide outreach and technical assistance to encourage and assist socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to own and operate farms and ranches and to participate equitably in the full range of agricultural programs offered by the Department.

The authorization was amended to require that the outreach and technical assistance being provided shall be used exclusively (1) to enhance coordination of the outreach, technical assistance, and education efforts authorized under agriculture programs; and (2) to assist the Secretary in (i) reaching current and prospective socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers in a linguistically appropriate manner; and (ii) improving the participation of those farmers and ranchers in Department programs. While Section 14013 of FCEA requires that the Secretary establish an Office of Advocacy and Outreach that includes a Socially Disadvantaged Farmers Group which "shall carry out section 2501(a)" of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, in fiscal year 2009, the Secretary delegated this authority to CSREES while the Office of Advocacy and Outreach is being established.

OASDFR brings the existing knowledge base to bear on farm and ranch management issues faced by socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers throughout the Nation.

### **B. Purpose and Priorities**

The primary purpose of OASDFR is to deliver outreach and technical assistance to assure opportunities for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to successfully acquire, own, operate, and retain farms and ranches; and assure equitable participation in the full range of USDA programs. OASDFR will support a wide range of outreach and assistance activities in farm management, financial management, marketing, application and bidding procedures, and other areas.

Applications must contain documentation of the socially disadvantaged group that is being targeted for assistance (see Part VIII, E., definitions 33 and 34) and justification as to why the targeted group is appropriate for assistance under this program. If a targeted group is not defined as socially disadvantaged in Part VIII, E., then, a Request for Determination must be submitted to CSREES for consideration (see Part III, A2).

Proposed projects might include one or more of the following: (1) the use of existing and the formation of new, outreach and assistance networks focused on increasing participation in various USDA and other programs by socially disadvantaged agricultural producers; (2) further development or modification of farm and ranch management (including marketing) and financial management curricula and materials designed to enhance the potential for farm and ranch ownership by socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers; (3) the development of innovative



delivery systems that improve the effectiveness of these programs; and (4) the development or improvement in the means by which assistance is provided to the targeted audiences.

To assure equitable participation by socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, OASDFR will give priority to projects that provide outreach and assistance in applying for and receiving aid under USDA programs administered by various agencies within the Department of Agriculture. In general, these include, but are not limited to, loan programs, guaranteed loan programs, allocations of crop base in each program crop, and various conservation programs. Specifically, pertinent programs include, but are not limited to, the following, identified by the Federal Domestic Assistance title and number: Emergency Conservation Program (10.054); Direct and Counter Cyclical Payments Program (10.055); Conservation Reserve Program (10.069); Emergency Loans (10.404); Farm Ownership Loans (10.407); and Soil Survey (10.903). There may be other Federal and State agricultural programs that also could assist members of socially disadvantaged groups. Applicants should provide a brief, relevant synopsis on the program(s) they are incorporating in their proposed project.

## **PART II— AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. Available Funding**

CSREES anticipates that approximately \$14.3 million will be available in FY 2009 to support this program. To the extent that funds are available for this purpose, CSREES will award grants for applications found to be meritorious by a peer review panel. The funding limit is set at \$100,000 per year for a maximum project period of three years; multi-year projects are given preference. There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

### **B. Types of Applications**

In FY 2009, applications may be submitted to OASDFR as “New”.

**1. New application** - This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to OASDFR. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

### **C. Project Type**

For FY 2009, OASDFR will support Standard projects (This is a grant instrument by which CSREES agrees to support a specified level of effort for a predetermined project period without the announced intention of providing additional support at a future date). OASDFR projects should provide technical assistance and outreach to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers with the ultimate aim of increasing and retaining ownership. Standard projects that incorporate multiple collaborators, particularly community-based collaborators, are encouraged. It is incumbent upon applicants (1) to adequately define and justify the needs of targeted groups; and (2) to document the potential impact of their project upon socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

Proposed projects should, as appropriate, address needs as determined by: (1) producer audiences (for example, producer's ability to market fresh produce, specialty crops, and dairy); (2) commodity mixes in the area(s) of interest; (3) type of outreach and assistance needs associated with available and appropriate USDA and other agricultural programs; (4) production, marketing, financial, legal, and human resource conditions in the area(s) being addressed; and/or (5) other factors that hold great potential for assisting producers in gaining and maintaining ownership of their farms and ranches, or enhance their opportunities for ownership.

Applicants should provide information about the degree to which partnerships and collaborations enhance: (1) the services to be delivered; and (2) the areas and numbers of the targeted audience that the applicant expects to assist. Applicants should explicitly discuss outreach designed to inform the targeted audience of the assistance available through a project, and the expected outcomes in terms of increased ownership of farms and ranches. While applicants may develop a needs assessment, applications that use existing needs assessments to justify proposed projects are often more competitive than those that include the development of an assessment as one of the project objectives. Applicants can strengthen their submission by documenting how certain methodologies or results can be transferred to another geographical area.

Applicants are encouraged to coordinate with other existing regional projects, as well as complement pertinent and relevant cross-regional activities. Projects that build on existing information networks and offer innovative or expanded activities are encouraged. Applicants are encouraged to closely examine the evaluation criteria noted in Part V, B. as the application is prepared.

In addition, applications should address or target one or more of the specific items below:

1. Meet a specialized OASDFR need that is local, State-specific, regional, or national in scope, (e.g., national coordination of OASDFR efforts) and that has common characteristics that can be addressed in a single project. Projects that are local or State-specific need to provide evidence that the need being addressed exists elsewhere and that the methodologies and results may apply in these other areas; and
2. Be willing to share findings with USDA and other interested entities and organizations by providing information on methodologies, data, analytical techniques, findings, etc.

## **PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **A. Eligible Applicants**

1. Applications may be submitted by:

(a) Any community-based organization, network, or coalition of community-based organizations that:

(1) Has demonstrated experience in providing agricultural education or other agriculturally related services to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers during the two-year period preceding the submission of the application;

(2) Has provided to the Secretary documentary evidence of work with, and on behalf of (i.e., advocacy group) socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers during the three-year period preceding the submission of an application for assistance under this program (documentary evidence shall include a narrative with specific information regarding: the scope of past projects; the number of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers served or located in the area served by the organization; activities conducted; community involvement; and copies of prior agreements, press releases, news articles, and other contemporaneous documents supporting the narrative); and

(3) Does not engage in activities prohibited under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. Therefore, only non-profit organizations may apply.

(b) An 1890 institution, including Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University (as defined in the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7601)) or 1994 institution (as defined in section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note)).

(c) An Indian Tribal Community College or an Alaska Native Cooperative College.

(d) A Hispanic-serving institution (as defined in section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)).

(e) Any other institution of higher education (as defined in the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)) that has demonstrated experience in providing agriculture education or other agriculturally related services to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in a region.

(f) An Indian tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b)) or a national tribal organization that has demonstrated experience in providing agriculture education or other agriculturally related services to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in a region.

(g) An organization or institution that received an award under this program before January 1, 1996, but only with respect to projects that the Secretary considers similar to projects previously carried out by the organization or institution under this program.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project; however, the subcontracted amount may not exceed one-third of the total grant award.

## 2. Request for determination

If a potential applicant proposes to fund a program targeted to a socially disadvantaged group not specifically identified in the Definitions section of this RFA (see Part VIII, E., definition 33 and 34), the potential applicant must submit a request to CSREES by COB on October 16, 2008 (5:00 p.m., Eastern Time). The request must contain documentation to support the target group being considered socially disadvantaged. The Secretary or designated individual will determine whether the group identified is eligible under this Program. The Request for Determination should be e-mailed to the Agency Contact identified in Part VII. The subject of the email must read "REQUEST FOR DETERMINATION." In addition, the following information must be provided in the order specified below:

- (a) Description of racial or ethnic group submitted for determination; and
- (b) Data or studies supporting designation of racial, ethnic, or socially disadvantaged group.

Each applicant in this category will be notified as to the outcome of the determination. If the determination is positive, the applicant will be invited to submit an application as outlined in this RFA.

## **B. Cost Sharing or Matching**

CSREES does not require matching support for this program and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria.

## PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### A. Electronic Submission Requirements

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to CSREES in response to this RFA.

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the PD/PI first contact an Authorized Representative (AR)(also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative or AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grant.gov. If the organization is not prepared, the AR should see [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get\\_registered.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp) for steps for preparing to submit applications through Grants.gov.

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. Download and install PureEdge Viewer, a small, free program that provides access to the grant application. See [http://www.grants.gov/resources/download\\_software.jsp#pureedge](http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#pureedge).
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on “**Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions**,” enter the funding opportunity number USDA-CSREES-ICGP-001825 in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.” This Guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

**If assistance is needed to access the application package** (e.g., downloading or navigating PureEdge forms, using PureEdge with a Macintosh computer), refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

- Grants.gov customer support  
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726  
Business Hours: Monday through Friday 7:00 am – 9:00 pm Eastern Standard Time  
Email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

See <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

## B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared according to the document entitled “CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.” This guide is part of the corresponding electronic application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is additional information needed in order to prepare an application in response to this RFA. **If any discrepancy between the two documents exists, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.**

**Note the attachment requirements (e.g., portable document format) in Part III section 3. of the Guide. ANY PROPOSALS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM CSREES REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from CSREES review. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business on the closing date in the RFA.**

**If you do not own PDF-generating software, Grants.gov provides online tools to assist applicants. Users will find a link to “Convert Documents to PDF” on <http://grants.gov/assets/PDFConversion.pdf>.**

**\*\*Double check page limits after converting the document to PDF format.\*\***

### **1. SF-424 (R&R) Cover Sheet – (Required Form)**

**Complete all applicable fields. The following, additional information may be helpful:**

**Field 2. Applicant Identifier** – This field is provided for the Applicant’s use if they have an internal tracking system they would like to use in tracking applications they have submitted. This field is not required.

**Field 3. Date received by State and State Application Identifier** – This is not applicable for OASDFR applications; these fields do not need to be completed.

**Field 5. Applicant Information** – This must be the legal name of the eligible college or university/organization (See Part III. A, Eligible Applicant). **Official correspondence will be directed to either the Project Director (Field 15) or the Authorized Representative (Field 19).**

**Field 8. Type of Application** – Only ‘New’ applications are permitted.

**Field 13. Proposed Project Start Date and End Date** – Please select the start date of the project at least six months after the submission due date for the program. Choose the end date to correspond to the correct duration of the project.

**Field 20. Pre-application** – Do not fill out this portion of the form. OASDFR is not accepting pre-applications in FY 2009.

## **2. R&R Other Project Information (Required Form)**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 3. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide. **Note: If a ‘Yes’ response is provided for Fields 1, 2, or 4.a, the applicant must provide the necessary assurances prior to an award being made.**

Field 6. Project Summary/Abstract – **PDF Attachment**. The Project Summary is limited to **250 words**. Title the attachment as ‘Project Summary’ in the document header and save file as ‘Project Summary’. A suggested template for the Project Summary/Abstract can be found at: [http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/templates/project\\_summary.doc](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/templates/project_summary.doc).

The Project Summary must indicate which specific FY 2009 Program Priority(ies) the proposed project addresses. The importance of a concise, informative Project Summary cannot be overemphasized.

Field 7. Project Narrative – **PDF Attachment. 25-Page Limit**. Title the attachment as ‘Project Narrative’ in the document header and save file as ‘Project Narrative’.

**PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative section may not exceed a total of 25 single- or double-spaced pages, including figures and tables.** These page limitations apply regardless of whether figures or tables are included. All pages, including those with figures and tables, should be numbered sequentially. Applications exceeding the applicable page limitation will be at risk of being excluded from CSREES review. These maximums have been established to ensure fair and equitable competition.

### **Project Narrative must include all of the following:**

(1) *Introduction* – Include a clear statement of the long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives of the proposed project. Summarize the body of knowledge or other past activities that substantiate the need for the proposed project. Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities related to the proposed project including the work of key project personnel. Include preliminary data/information pertinent to the outreach and technical assistance program. Include in-depth information on the following, when applicable:

- (a) Estimates of the magnitude of the issues and their relevance to stakeholders, including growers, processors, buyers, and consumers, as well as ongoing State-Federal food and agricultural research. Indicate the pay-off of this project to producers and to other stakeholders;
- (b) Role of the stakeholders in problem identification, planning, and implementation and evaluation, as appropriate; and
- (c) Reasons for having the work performed at the proposing institution.

(2) *Objectives* – Clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged statement(s) of specific aims of the proposed effort must be included in all applications.

(3) *Methods* – The procedures or methodology to be applied to the proposed effort should be explicitly stated. This section should include, but not necessarily be limited to:



- (a) A description of stakeholder involvement in problem identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation, including documentation of participation or reference to documentation, where appropriate;
- (b) A description of the proposed project activities in the sequence in which it is planned to carry them out;
- (c) Techniques to be employed, including their feasibility and rationale for their use in this project;
- (d) Kinds of results expected;
- (e) Means by which data will be analyzed or interpreted;
- (f) Pitfalls that might be encountered;
- (g) Limitations to proposed procedures; and
- (h) Best practices and plans on dissemination of models.

(4) *Project Timetable* – The application should outline all important phases as a function of time, year by year, for the entire project, including periods beyond the grant funding period.

(5) *Evaluation Component* – Applications need to incorporate a project evaluation component that will permit a qualitative and quantitative assessment of expected project impacts. Identify parameters for how success of the proposed project will be measured. Such assessments need to relate to increases in participation rates in USDA programs and in increasing the ownership of farming and ranching operations by socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

Field 9. Facilities & Other Resources – **PDF Attachment. No Page Limit.** Title the attachment as ‘Facilities & Other Resources’ in the document header and save the file as ‘Facilities & Other Resources’.

All facilities which are available for use or assignment to the project during the requested period of support should be reported and described briefly.

Field 10. Equipment – **PDF Attachment. No Page Limit.** Title the attachment as ‘Equipment’ in the document header and save file as ‘Equipment’.

All items of major equipment or instrumentation available for use or assignment to the proposed project should be itemized. In addition to describing available equipment, items of nonexpendable equipment necessary to conduct and successfully complete the proposed project should be listed in Field C. of the R&R Budget and described in the Budget Justification (Field K of the R&R Budget).

Field 11. Other Attachments.

- **Appendices to Project Narrative – PDF Attachment.** Title the attachment as ‘Appendices’ in the document header and save file as ‘Appendices’. Appendices to the Project Narrative are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed project. The addition of appendices should not be used to circumvent the page limitations.
- **Collaborative Arrangements – PDF Attachment. No Page Limit.** Title the attachment as ‘Collaborative Arrangements’ in the document header and save file as ‘Collaborative Arrangement’. If it is necessary to enter into formal consulting or

collaborative arrangements with others, such arrangements should be fully explained and justified. If the consultant(s) or collaborator(s) are known at the time of the application, a vitae or resume should be provided. In addition, evidence (e.g., letter of support signed by the AR of the consultant/collaborating organization) should be provided indicating that the collaborators involved have agreed to render these services. The applicant also will be required to provide additional information on consultants and collaborators in the budget portion of the application.

- **Management Plan – PDF Attachment. 3-Page Limit.** Title the attachment as ‘Management Plan’ and save file as ‘Management Plan’. Clearly articulate the management plan for the project. Include a coordination strategy to enhance communication, data sharing, and reporting among members of the project team, as well as a time line for project implementation and delivery of project products.
- **Results from Prior OASDFR Support – PDF Attachment. 1 Page Limit per award.** Title the attachment as ‘Results from Prior OASDFR Support’ in the document header and save file as ‘Results from Prior OASDFR Support’.

If the PD or a co-PD has received OASDFR support in the past 5 years, information on results from that prior funding is required. This information will be used in the review of the application. For renewal applications, provision of the Progress Report (see below) is sufficient and information need not be repeated in this section. For each award, list the CSREES award number, the amount and period of support, the title of the project, and a summary of the results of the completed work.

- **Cooperation and Institutional Units Involved – PDF Attachment. No Page Limit.** Title the attachment as ‘Cooperation and Institutional Units Involved’ and save file as ‘Cooperative and Institutional Units Involved’. Cooperative, multi-institutional, and multi-disciplinary applications are encouraged. Identify each institutional unit contributing to the project and designate the lead institution or institutional unit. When appropriate, the project should be coordinated with the efforts of other State and/or national programs. Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each institutional partner of the project team.

### **3. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 4. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

A Senior/Key Person Profile should be completed for the PD and each co-PD, senior associate, and other professional personnel, including collaborators playing an active role in the project. Collaborators only providing services or materials should not be listed in the R&R Senior/Key Person Profile. Evidence (letters of support) for this type of collaboration should be provided in the Documentation of Collaboration, see section B, 2. Field 11) of this part.

- a. **Biographical Sketch – PDF Attachment. 2 Page Limit (excluding publications listings) per PD, co-PD, senior associate, and other professional personnel.** Title the attachment as ‘Biographical Sketch’ in the document header and save file as ‘Biographical Sketch’. A

biographical sketch (vitae) of the PD and each co-PD, senior associate, and other professional personnel should be included.

b. Current and Pending Support – **PDF Attachment. No Page Limit.** Title the attachment as ‘Current and Pending Support’ in the document header and save file as ‘Current and Pending Support’. A suggested template for the Current and Pending Support can be found at: [http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/templates/current\\_pending.doc](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/templates/current_pending.doc).

Current and pending support information is required only for personnel with PD or co-PD(s) indicated as Project Role on the R&R Senior/Key Person Profile. All applications must contain a list of Current and Pending Support detailing public or private support (including in-house support) to which personnel identified in the application have committed portions of their time, whether or not salary support for person(s) involved is included in the budget. **Please note that the project being proposed should be included in the pending section of the form.** Total project time listed for each PD should not exceed 100 percent for concurrent projects.

#### **4. R&R Personal Data**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 5. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide. **PLEASE DO NOT PROVIDE THE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OF PROJECT DIRECTOR / PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR.**

#### **5. R&R Budget**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 6. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Budget Periods. Applications must contain a budget for each budget period for the entire duration of the proposed project. Annual and cumulative budgets are required. All budgets should include reasonable amounts to attend annual investigator meetings. Applicants must complete the mandatory fields on each page of the first budget period and attach the Budget Justification (see item (5) Field K. Budget Justification, of this section) to enable the “Next Period” button to become active.

b. Subcontract Arrangements. If it will be necessary to enter into a formal subcontract agreement with another institution, financial arrangements must be detailed in the “R&R Subaward Budget Attachment(s) Form.” Annual and cumulative budgets and a budget justification are required for each subcontract agreement. Refer to Part V, 7. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide for instructions on completing this form.

Field H. Indirect Costs – See Section D., Funding Restrictions, of this Part for indirect cost information.

Field K. Budget Justification – **PDF Attachment. No Page Limit.** Title the attachment as ‘Budget Justification’ in the document header and save file as ‘Budget Justification’.

All budget categories, with the exception of Indirect Costs, for which support is requested, must be individually listed (with costs) in the same order as the budget. If consulting, collaborative, or subcontractual arrangements are included in the application, these arrangements should be fully

explained and justified. The rate of pay for any consultant must be included, if known at the time of application. Please include a cost breakdown for the consultant. Letters of consent or collaboration or other evidence should be provided to show that collaborators have agreed to participate (Field 11, Other Project Information). A proposed statement of work, vitae, and a budget for each arrangement involving the transfer of substantive programmatic work or the provision of financial assistance to a third party must be supplied. In multi-institutional applications, a budget and budget narrative must be included for each institution involved. The lead institution and each participating institution must be identified.

## **6. Supplemental Information Form**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 1. of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

Field 2. Program to which you are applying – Enter “OASDFR” or “Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Competitive Grants Program” for Program Code Name and “2501” for Program Code.

Field 8. Conflict of Interest List – **PDF Attachment. No Page Limit.** Title the attachment as ‘Conflict of Interest’ in the document header and save file as ‘Conflict of Interest’.

**A Conflict of Interest List is required for all applications submitted to the OASDFR. The Conflict of Interest List should be provided as a separate PDF attachment and not included in the vitae or resume.** A suggested template for the Conflict of Interest List can be found at: [http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/templates/conflict\\_of\\_interest.doc](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/templates/conflict_of_interest.doc). A Conflict of Interest List must be provided for all individuals who have submitted a Biographical Sketch in response to item d., (1) of this section.

## **C. Submission Dates and Times**

**Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.**

Electronic applications must be submitted to Grants.gov by COB on December 12, 2008 (5:00 p.m., Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

Requests for Determination must be e-mailed to the Agency Contact identified in Part VII by COB on October 16, 2008 (5:00 p.m., Eastern Time). Requests received after this deadline will not be considered. See Part III, A., 2. for instructions.

The receipt of all applications will be acknowledged by e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received a confirmation message from CSREES within 30 days of submission of the application, please contact the Program Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result**

**in the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.**

#### **D. Funding Restrictions**

Section 7132 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, amended the National Agriculture Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3310(a)), limiting indirect costs to 22 percent of the total Federal funds provided under each award. Therefore, when preparing budgets, applicants should limit their requests for recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of their institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 22 percent of total Federal funds awarded.

Funds may not be used for the renovation or refurbishment of research spaces (including energy retrofitting); purchase or installations of fixed equipment in such spaces; or planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

No more than one-third of the total award may be subcontracted to a third party.

#### **E. Other Submission Requirements**

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled "A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov."

## **PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. General**

Each application will be evaluated in a two-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel. A number of expert reviewers will conduct a merit review based on the evaluation criteria. The views of the individual reviewers will be used by CSREES to determine which applications will be recommended to the Administrator for funding. Evaluated applications will be ranked based on merit. Final approval of those applications recommended for award will be made by the Administrator.

Reviewers will be selected based upon training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or outreach and extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged or has been engaged in providing outreach and assistance to disadvantaged groups; (b) experts from various areas of specialization within relevant community based and/or scientific, education, or extension fields that provide outreach and assistance to disadvantaged groups; (c) other experts (e.g., members of community-based organizations, producers, range or forest managers/operators, processors and/or consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs; (d) experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, or private and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) maintaining a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and gender representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness of outreach and assistance programs for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

### **B. Evaluation Criteria**

To assure equitable participation by socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, OASDFR will give priority to projects that provide outreach and assistance in applying for and receiving aid under USDA programs administered by various agencies within the Department of Agriculture. In general, these include, but are not limited to, loan programs, guaranteed loan programs, allocations of crop base in each program crop, and various conservation programs. Specifically, pertinent programs include, but are not limited to, the following, identified by the Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance title and number: Emergency Conservation Program (10.054); Direct and Counter Cyclical Payments Program (10.055); Conservation Reserve Program (10.069); Emergency Loans (10.404); Farm Ownership Loans (10.407); and Soil Survey (10.903). There may be other Federal and State agricultural programs that also could assist members of socially disadvantaged groups. Applicants should provide a brief, relevant synopsis on the program(s) they are incorporating in their proposed project.

The evaluation criteria noted below will be used in reviewing applications submitted in response to this RFA.

1. The degree to which the proposed project addresses the major purposes of OASDFR to reach socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as described in Part I. B; Note: Applications that do not directly address at least one of the major purposes of the OASDFR program will not receive consideration for funding.
2. The degree to which the statement of work reflects effective strategies for providing outreach and assistance to socially disadvantaged groups and the potential for achieving project objectives.
3. Adequacy of managing the project and the experience and expertise of key personnel in working with and on behalf of socially disadvantaged clientele, adequacy of facilities and institutional commitment and collaborations.
4. The quality of stakeholder/participant involvement in the proposed project.
5. The soundness of the plan for assessing and evaluating project outcomes and the accomplishment of project goals.

### **C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality**

During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution shall be determined by reference to the current Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, Virginia 22042. Phone: (703) 532-2300. Web site: <http://www.hepinc.com>.

Names of submitting institutions, as well as application content and peer evaluations, will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of peer reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

### **D. Organizational Management Information**

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one-time basis as part of the responsibility determination prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another CSREES program. CSREES will provide copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on the status as one of these entities, there are factors that may exclude an applicant from receiving Federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

## **PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION**

### **A. General**

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of CSREES shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the awarding official of CSREES as the effective date of the grant shall be no later than September 30 of the Federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. It should be noted that the project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by CSREES under this RFA shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's assistance regulations (2 CFR 215 and 7 CFR 3430).

### **B. Award Notice**

The USDA award document shall include at a minimum the following:

1. Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the Administrator has awarded a grant under the terms of this request for applications;
2. Title of project;
3. Name(s) and institution(s) of PDs chosen to direct and control approved activities;
4. Identifying grant number assigned by the Department;
5. Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring re-competition for funds;
6. Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the Administrator during the project period;
7. Legal authority(ies) under which the grant is awarded;
8. Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
9. Applicable award terms and conditions (see <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view CSREES award terms and conditions);
10. Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the grant award; and



11. Other information or provisions deemed necessary by CSREES to carry out its respective granting activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular grant.

### **C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Several Federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. For CSREES, these include, but are not limited to:

2 CFR Part 215—Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations (OMB Circular A-110).

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121—USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

7 CFR Part 3017—USDA implementation of Government wide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and Government wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants).

7 CFR Part 3018—USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying. Imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of Federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

7 CFR Part 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-profit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3407—CSREES procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

7 CFR Part 3430—CSREES procedures to implement Competitive and Noncompetitive Nonformula Grant Programs—General Grant Administrative Provisions and Program-Specific Administrative Provisions for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative.

29 U.S.C. 794 (section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 7 CFR Part 15b (USDA implementation of statute)—prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in Federally assisted programs.

35 U.S.C. 200 et seq.—Bayh-Dole Act, controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in Federally assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

#### **D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements**

Grantees are required to submit initial project information and annual and summary reports to CSREES' Current Research Information System (CRIS). The CRIS database contains narrative project information, progress/impact statements, and final technical reports that are made available to the public. For applications recommended for funding, instructions on preparing and submitting project documentation will be provided to the applicant by the agency contact.

**Documentation must be submitted to CRIS before CSREES funds will be released.** Project reports will be requested by the CRIS office when required. For more information about CRIS, visit <http://cris.csrees.usda.gov>.

If a project is funded, the Project Director will be required to attend annual investigator meetings. Reasonable travel expenses should be included as part of the project budget.

## **PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT**

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact Dr. Dionne Toombs; National Program Leader; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U. S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2241; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2241; telephone: (202) 401-2138; fax: (202) 401-6488; e-mail: [dtoombs@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:dtoombs@csrees.usda.gov).

## **PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION**

### **A. Access to Review Information**

Copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments will be sent to the applicant PD after the review process has been completed.

### **B. Use of Funds; Changes**

#### **1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility**

Unless the terms and conditions of the grant state otherwise, the grantee may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of grant funds.

#### **2. Changes in Project Plans**

(a) The permissible changes by the grantee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project grant shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other similar aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the grantee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the USDA Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the program contact.

(b) Changes in approved goals or objectives shall be requested by the grantee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests for such changes be approved that are outside the scope of the original approved project.

(c) Changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel shall be requested by the grantee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes.

(d) Transfers of actual performance of the substantive programmatic work in whole or in part and provisions for payment of funds, whether or not Federal funds are involved, shall be requested by the grantee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the grant.

(e) Changes in Project Period: The project period may be extended by CSREES without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) as the ADO determines may be necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed five years. Any extension of time shall be conditioned upon prior request by the grantee and approval in writing by the ADO, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of a grant.

(f) Changes in Approved Budget: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved budget must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to instituting such changes if the revision will involve transfers or expenditures of amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or award.

### **C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards**

When an application results in a grant, it becomes a part of the record of CSREES' transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that CSREES determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. The original copy of an application that does not result in a grant will be retained by the Agency for a period of three years. Other copies will be destroyed. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

### **D. Regulatory Information**

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule-related Notice to 2 CFR, this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

### **E. Definitions**

For the purpose of this program, the following definitions are applicable:

Agriculture Programs means those activities established or authorized by: the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1421 et seq.); the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1921 et seq.); the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 (7 U.S.C. 1281 et seq.); the Soil Conservation Act; the Domestic Allotment Assistance Act; the Food Security Act of 1985; and other such acts as determined by the Administrator, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, USDA, on a case-by-case basis either at the Administrator's initiative or in response to a written request with supporting explanation for inclusion of an Act. Covered programs include, but are not limited to, agricultural conservation program, programs comprising the environmental conservation acreage reserve program (ECARP), conservation technical assistance program, emergency conservation program, forestry incentives program, Great Plains Conservation Program, integrated farm management option program, price support and production adjustment program, rural environmental conservation program, soil survey program, water bank program, and the farm loan programs (farm ownership, operating soil and water, and emergency loans).

Alaska Native means a citizen of the United States who is a person of one-fourth degree or more Alaska Indian (including Tsimshian Indians not enrolled in the Metlaktla Indian Community),

Eskimo, or Aleut blood, or combination thereof. It also includes, in the absence of proof of a minimum blood quantum, any citizen of the United States who is regarded as an Alaska Native by the Native Village or Native group of which he claims to be a member and whose father or mother is (or if deceased, was) regarded as Native by any village or group.

Alaska Native cooperative colleges means any post-secondary education institution that at the time of application, has an enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 20 percent Alaska Native students.

Assistance means providing hands-on educational and technical assistance through workshops, site visits and other means of contact with socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to enable them to understand the application process and to apply for or to take advantage of USDA and other relevant and pertinent programs. Assistance is also defined as providing guidance and help in understanding the process and procedures for applying for grants, loans, mortgages, or other financial resources that assist socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in gaining ownership of their farming and ranching operations.

Community-based organization means a nongovernmental organization with a well-defined constituency that includes all or part of a particular community; e.g. communities consisting of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

Farmer/Rancher means an owner and /or operator who has a vested interest in the operation of the farm or ranch.

Hispanic serving post-secondary educational institution means a post-secondary educational institution that: (a) at the time of application, has an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students that is at least 25 percent Hispanic students; and (b) provides assurances that not less than 50 percent of the institution's Hispanic students are low-income individuals.

Indian Tribe or national tribal organization means any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (85 Stat. 688) (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

Indian Tribal Community Colleges means a post-secondary education institution which:

(a) is formally controlled, or has been officially sanctioned, or chartered, by the governing body of an Indian tribe or tribes, except no more than one such institution shall be recognized with respect to any such tribe; and (b) includes an institution listed in the Equity in Educational Land Grant Status Act of 1994, as amended (7 U.S.C. 301 note). The 1994 Land-Grant Institutions are: Bay Mills Community College, Blackfeet Community College, Cankdeska Cikana Community College, Chief Dull Knife Memorial College, College of Menominee Nation, Crownpoint Institute of Technology, D-Q University, Dine' Community College, Fond Du Lac Tribal and Community College, Fort Belknap College, Fort Berthold Community College, Fort Peck Community College, Haskell Indian Nations University, Ilisagvik College, Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development, Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College, Leech Lake Tribal College, Little Big Horn College, Little Priest Tribal

College, Nebraska Indian Community College, Northwest Indian College, Oglala Lakota College, Salish Kootenai College, Sinte Gleska University, Sisseton Wahpeton Community College, Si Tanka/Huron University, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College, Sitting Bull College, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, Stone Child College, Tohono O'odham Community College, Turtle Mountain Community College, United Tribes Technical College, and White Earth Tribal and Community College.

Institution of Higher Education means an educational institution in any State that (a) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate; (b) is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education; (c) provides an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree or provides not less than a 2-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree; (d) is a public or other nonprofit institution; and (e) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or if not so accredited, is an institution that has been granted pre-accreditation status by such an agency or association that has been recognized by the Secretary of Education for the granting of pre-accreditation status, and the Secretary of Education has determined that there is satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such an agency or association within a reasonable time.

Junior or Community College means an institution of higher education: (a) that admits as regular students persons who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance in the State in which the institution is located and who have the ability to benefit from the training offered by the institution; (b) that does not provide an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree (or an equivalent degree); and (c) that (i) provides an educational program for not less than 2 years in duration that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree; or (ii) offers a 2-year program in engineering, mathematics, or the physical or biological sciences, designed to prepare a student to work as a technician or at the semiprofessional level in engineering, scientific, or other technological fields requiring an understanding and application of basic engineering, scientific, or mathematical principles of knowledge.

Low-income individual means an individual from a family whose taxable income for the preceding year did not exceed 150 percent of an amount equal to the poverty level determined using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census.

Outreach means the use of formal and informal educational presentations, materials, website materials, etc., that are designed to inform socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers about USDA programs, other relevant and pertinent programs, and improvements in farm and ranch management in its many dimensions with the purpose of increasing participation in USDA programs and rates of ownership and operation of farms and ranches by members of socially disadvantaged groups.

Partnering means a joint effort among two or more institutions, organizations and/or other entities with the capacity to conduct projects intended and designed to accomplish the purpose of the program.

Peer review means an evaluation of a proposed project for scientific or technical quality and relevance performed by experts with the scientific knowledge and technical skills to conduct the proposed work or to give expert advice on the merits of a project.

Performance target means expected measurable accomplishments that can be used to document the extent of change brought about by the project.

Socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher means a farmer or rancher who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group.

Socially disadvantaged group means a group whose members have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudices because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities. Socially disadvantaged groups include, but are not limited to, African Americans, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asians, and Pacific Islanders. The Secretary will determine on a case-by-case basis whether additional groups qualify under this definition, either at the Secretary's initiative or in response to a written request with supporting explanation.



## ***OASDFR Application Checklist***

Only electronic applications may be submitted to CSREES via Grants.gov in response to this RFA. All applications submitted under the OASDFR program must contain the applicable elements outlined in these guidelines. The following checklist has been prepared to assist in ensuring that the application is complete prior to submission:

- ◆ Have all attachments been submitted in portable document format (PDF)? CSREES will only accept PDF attachments. See Part III of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.
- ◆ Have you followed the guidelines for filling out your electronic application provided in the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide, which is posted along with the electronic SF 424 R&R application package on Grants.gov?
- ◆ Have you followed the guidelines for filling out your electronic application provided in this RFA?
- ◆ Do all submitted PDF documents have one-inch margins and are typed or word processed using no font size smaller than 12 point and six lines per inch? Are all PDF documents numbered sequentially on each page of the attachment? Are all page limitations for a given attachment followed? Submitted proposals that do not meet these requirements for PDF attachments will be at risk of being excluded from CSREES review.
- ◆ Have all components of the SF 424 Research and Related (R&R) Application Package been completed? Did you use the “Check Package for Errors” feature of the PureEdge viewer (see section 1.8 of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide)?
  - ☐ SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet
  - ☐ R&R Other Project Information
  - ☐ R&R Senior/Key Person Profile
  - ☐ R&R Budget
  - ☐ CSREES Supplemental Information Form
  - ☐ R&R Subaward Budget Attachment Form (if applicable)

### ◆ **SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet**

- Have all required fields been completed?

## ◆ **R&R Other Project Information**

- **Project Summary/Abstract**  
Did you use the suggested Project Summary/Abstract Template found at:  
[http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/templates/project\\_summary.doc?](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/templates/project_summary.doc?)  
Has the Project Summary PDF been attached to this form in Field 6?  
Are the names and affiliated organizations of all Project Directors listed at the top of the page in addition to the title of the project?  
Has a specific program priority been identified in the Project Summary?  
Does the Project Summary include research, education, and/or extension objectives, as appropriate?  
Does this section adhere to the formats?  
If the application is a resubmission, does it respond to previous review?
- **Project Narrative**  
Has the Project Narrative PDF been attached to this form in Field 7?  
Is the project fully described?  
If a renewal application, is a clearly marked progress report included?  
Does this section adhere to the format and page limitations?
- **Response to Previous Review** (for resubmitted applications)  
Has the Response to Previous Review been included in the Project Narrative?  
Are comments from the previous review addressed?  
Has the application been clearly and meaningfully revised and are the revisions briefly described?
- **Bibliography & References Cited**  
Has the Bibliography & References Cited PDF been attached to this form in Field 8?  
Are all references cited and are all citations referenced?  
Do all citations contain a title, the names of all authors, and are they in accepted journal format?
- **Facilities & Other Resources**  
Has the Facilities & Other Resources PDF been attached to this form in Field 9?  
Has a description of facilities, sufficient to indicate you will be able to carry out this project, been given?
- **Equipment**  
Has the Equipment PDF been attached to this form in Field 10?  
Is the description of your equipment sufficient to indicate that you will be able to carry out this project?
- **Management Plan**  
Has the Management Plan PDF been attached to this form in Field 11?  
For integrated projects only, are the management plan and timeline for project implementation clearly described?

- Collaborative Arrangements  
Has the Collaborative Arrangements PDF been attached to this form in Field 11?
- Results from Prior OASDFR Support (if appropriate)  
Has the Results from Prior NRI Support PDF been attached to this form in Field 11?  
Does this section adhere to the format and page limitations?
- Appendices to Project Description  
Has the Appendices to Project Description PDF been attached to this form in Field 11?  
Are the reprints/preprints limited to 2 (as described in the instructions)?

◆ **R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)**

- Biographical Sketch  
Has the biographical sketch (vitae) PDF for the PD and each co-PD, senior associate, and other professional personnel been attached?  
Are roles and responsibilities of the PD, co-PD(s), and/or collaborator(s) clearly described?
- Current and Pending Support  
Did you use the suggested Current and Pending Support Template found at:  
[http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/templates/current\\_pending.doc?](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/templates/current_pending.doc?)  
Has the Current and Pending Support PDF for personnel with PD or co-PD(s) been attached?  
Have all current and pending projects been listed and summarized, **including this proposal?**

◆ **R&R Personal Data (Optional) DO NOT PROVIDE THE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OF THE PROJECT DIRECTOR/PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR.**

- Have all fields been completed?

◆ **R&R Budget**

- Have all fields been completed for each PD and co-PD(s)?
- Are annual and summary budgets included? For multi-institution applications, has a subaward budget been included for each institution involved?
- Budget Justification  
Has the Budget Justification PDF been attached to this form in Field K?  
Are budget items individually justified?  
For multi-institutional applications, has a budget justification been included for each institution involved?  
Have any matching requirements been addressed, if applicable?

◆ **Supplemental Information Form**

- Does Field 2 indicate the Program Code Name and Program Code to which you are applying?
- Have you included the required Conflict of Interest List (PDF) attachment? Include this one-page attachment even if your responses to the questions are “N.A.”.