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USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) EPSCoR Overview

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National Institute of Food & Agriculture **(NIFA: www.nifa.usda.gov)**

- USDA's Extramural funding to advance food & agricultural research, education, & extension (Competitive & Non-Competitive Programs)
- Initiated October 1, 2009
- Preceded by Cooperative State, Research, Education, and Extension Service



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NIFA (Washington, DC)





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USDA-NIFA Cross-Institute & Office EPSCoR Management Team

Nancy Cavallaro & Bart Hewitt: co-leaders

Gabrielle Armstrong

Shawn Bennett

Daniel Cassidy

Erin Daly

Peter Johnson

Liang Shiou Lin

Sharon Lumpkin

Ray Russell

Etta Saltos

Topics to address...

- Where to look for USDA's EPSCoR funding
- Agriculture & Food Research Initiative (AFRI)
- EPSCoR options



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Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)

- NIFA's largest competitive grants program
 - EPSCoR funding is included here
- All AFRI information indexed at:
<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/afri/afri.html>
 - Open and TBA AFRI RFAs:
<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/afri.html>



Agriculture and Food Research Initiative

Five Challenge Areas (separate RFA's)

1. Childhood Obesity Prevention
2. Climate Variability & Change
3. Food Security
4. Food Safety
5. Sustainable Bioenergy



Challenge Area RFAs

- Often Inter/ trans-disciplinary
- Integrated (research + education + extension)
- Research or Education or Extension
- Up to 5 years duration



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Agriculture and Food Research Initiative

One Foundation Program RFA

1. Build a foundation of knowledge for solving current and future societal challenges
2. Majority are research funding opportunities



AFRI Foundation Program RFA includes

6 areas:

1. Plant Health, Production & Plant Products
2. Animal Health, Production & Animal Products
3. Food Safety, Nutrition, & Health
4. Renewable Energy, Natural Resources, & Environment
5. Agriculture Systems & Technology
6. Agriculture Economics & Rural Communities



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Agriculture and Food Research Initiative

One NIFA Fellowships Grant Program RFA

1. Offer individual fellowships for pre- and postdoctoral students – *NIFA Fellows*
2. Focus on the broad Challenge Areas, wide topic eligibility

2.5% AFRI budget set-aside for pre- and post-doctoral proposals open to individuals at ALL institutions



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Agriculture and Food Research Initiative

Interagency Collaborative RFA's such as:

1. Ecology and Evolution of Infectious Disease
(USDA-NIFA; NIH; NSF; BBSRC)

http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=nsf11580

Proposal deadline: December 7, 2011



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AFRI



- Wide Eligibility:

Research: State AES, colleges, universities, university research foundations, other research institutions & organizations, Federal agencies, national laboratories, private organizations or corporations, individuals

Integrated: Colleges, universities, 1994 Institutions, Hispanic-serving agricultural colleges and universities

- Indirect costs: Currently Capped at 22%
- Matching funds (generally only equipment/ waivers may also apply)



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AFRI Proposal types

- Standard (research; education; extension; or, integrated)
- Conference
- Food and Agricultural Science Enhancement (FASE): (restricted eligibility= EPSCoR bonus !)
 - Pre- and Postdoctoral Fellowships
 - New Investigator
 - Strengthening



FASE Proposal types

- **Predoctoral Fellowships:**
 - \$75,000 (stipend, tuition, fees)
 - Research, education, or extension
 - Advance to Ph.D. candidacy (complete preliminary qualifying exam) by proposal deadline;
 - Letter of intent: November 8, 2011
 - Proposal deadline: January 19, 2012



FASE Proposal types (cont.)

- **Postdoctoral Fellowships:**
 - \$130,000 (including institutional allowance)
 - Research, education, or extension
 - Ph.D., or D.V.M., or M.D. degree no earlier than 2009 and no later than July 19, 2012
 - Letter of intent: November 8, 2011
 - Proposal deadline: January 19, 2012



FASE Proposal types (cont.)

- **New Investigators:**

- Less than 5 years postgraduate, career-track experience
- Research, education, or extension
- No competitive Federal funds beyond pre- or postdoctoral grants or AFRI seed grants
- No specific RFA: identify AFRI program for your topic and submit to its deadlines
- Proposal same as non-new investigator except box checked indicating eligibility



7.5% AFRI budget set-aside for meritorious proposals that are either seed proposals, sabbaticals, or equipment requests OR larger proposals below the funding line cut-off for:

- EPSCoR institutions
- Small or mid-sized or minority-serving institutions with limited success for federal funding



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NIFA re-assesses which states are eligible for USDA EPSCoR annually

EPSCoR States – Every year, USDA states generated by calculating which states had a funding level no higher than the 38th percentile of all states from AFRI during previous 3 years (19 states)



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2012 EPSCoR States:

- Alabama
- Alaska
- Connecticut
- Idaho
- Kentucky
- Maine
- Mississippi
- Montana
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Mexico
- North Dakota
- Oklahoma
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Vermont
- West Virginia
- Wyoming



Other USDA EPSCoR eligible Entities:

- American Samoa
- District of Columbia
- Guam
- Micronesia
- Northern Mariana Islands
- Puerto Rico
- Virgin Islands of the U.S.



If your state “graduates” from EPSCoR, you can still qualify for additional funding opportunities if...

- 1) **Small and mid-sized academic institutions** with current total enrollment of 17,500 or less, or **Minority-serving institutions**: enrollment of minorities exceeds 50 %
- 2) **AND Limited institutional success**: not among the most successful universities and colleges receiving federal funds for science and engineering.
(See RFA Table 1)



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EPSCoR options/ benefits



Strengthening Grants: *limited to EPSCoR & Small or Mid-sized or Minority-serving institutions with limited success*

- **Seed Grants (\$150,000 for 2 year duration):**
 - Collect preliminary data for future AFRI funding
- **Sabbatical Grants**
 - Up to one year of salary, funds for travel & supplies; mini-sabbaticals also appropriate
- **Equipment Grants: 50% of cost or \$50,000 for one piece of equipment (\$10,000-250,000)**
 - Matching, but waivers possible < \$ 25,000
 - No IDC



Seed grants, Sabbaticals, Equipment

- No specific RFA: identify AFRI program for your topic and submit to its deadlines
- Research, education, or extension; integrated
- Project narrative limited to 7 pages 😊
- Each program (e.g., Animal Health Foundation; Policy Options for and Impacts on Regional Biofuels Production Systems; etc.) evaluates all seeds, sabbaticals, equipment together



More EPSCoR options / benefits !

- **Strengthening Standard Proposal:**
 - Research, education, or extension; integrated
 - No specific RFA: identify AFRI program for your topic and submit to its deadlines
 - Proposal same as standard proposal that everyone can submit except box checked indicating eligibility



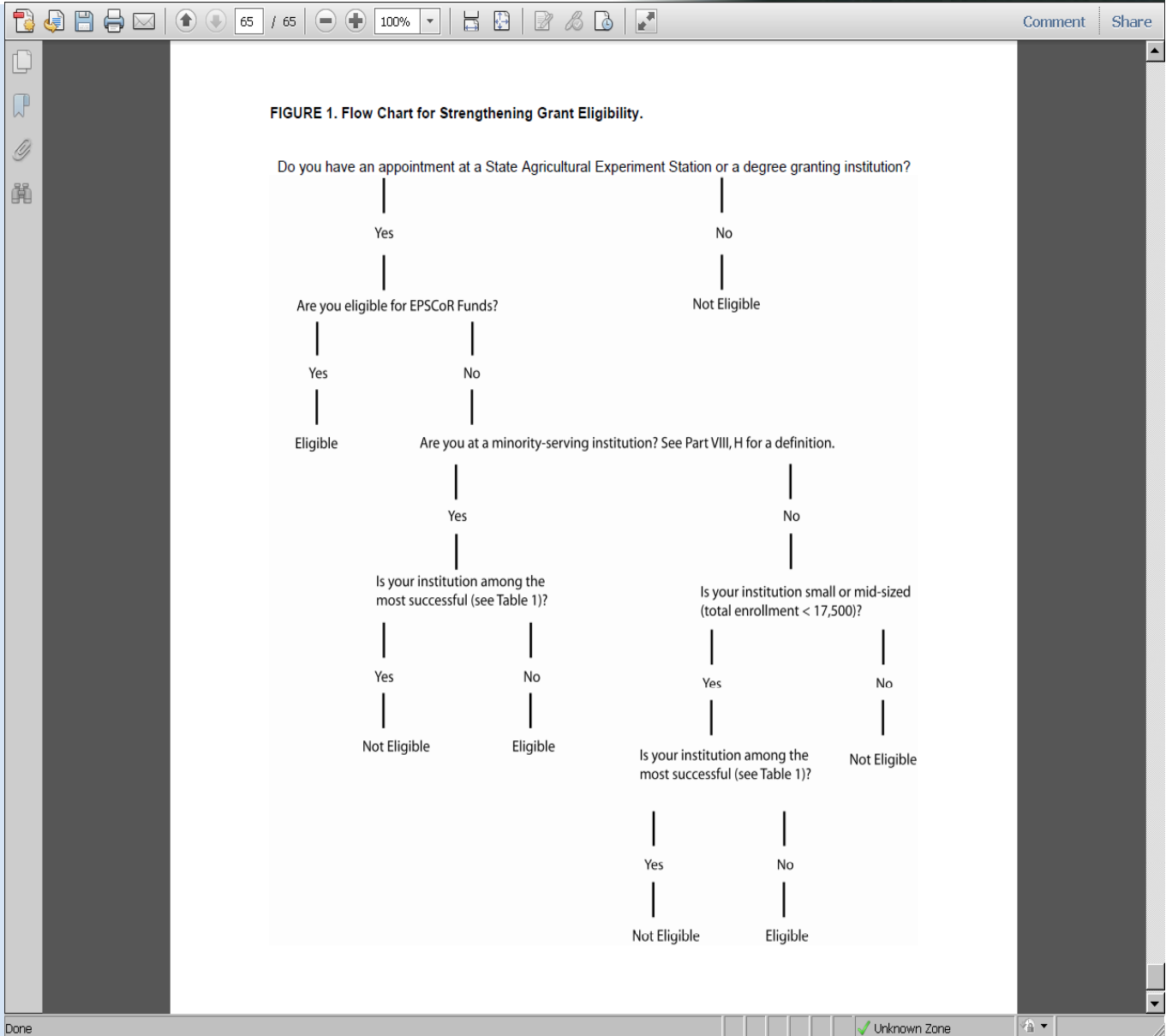
Benefit of Set-aside \$ to EPSCoR institutions: 2 funding chances in programs !

- Hypothetical Example:
 - 100 proposals
 - All institution proposals first compete against each other & ranked (including EPSCoR)
 - Program funds can support top 20 submissions (non-EPSCoR + EPSCoR)
 - 7.5% additional \$\$\$ to support other meritorious EPSCoR proposals below initial funding cut-off



Helpful eligibility flow chart

Last Page Of AFRI RFA's





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NIFA

EPSCoR

THANK YOU....