



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food
and Agriculture



BIOENERGY, CLIMATE,
AND ENVIRONMENT



FOOD PRODUCTION
AND SUSTAINABILITY



YOUTH, FAMILY,
AND COMMUNITY



FOOD SAFETY
AND NUTRITION



INTERNATIONAL
PROGRAMS



USDA NIFA

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food
and Agriculture

INVESTING IN SCIENCE | SECURING OUR FUTURE | WWW.NIFA.USDA.GOV

NIFA Implementation of Centers of Excellence

Input Listening Session
July 17 and July 31, 2014



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food
and Agriculture

INVESTING IN SCIENCE | SECURING OUR FUTURE | WWW.NIFA.USDA.GOV

Topics to be Covered

- Why have Centers of Excellence?
- Who can be a Center of Excellence?
- How are Centers of Excellence Selected?
- How Might NIFA Identify Centers?
- How Might NIFA Provide Priority Consideration for Funding Centers?



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food
and Agriculture

INVESTING IN SCIENCE | SECURING OUR FUTURE | WWW.NIFA.USDA.GOV

Why Have Centers of Excellence?

- 2014 Farm Bill requires NIFA identify Centers of Excellence for food and agricultural research, extension, and education activities
- Purpose: to provide these Centers of Excellence with priority consideration when selecting recipients of grants from any of the Agency's research or extension competitive grant programs

Who Can Be a Center?

- Centers' include 1 or more of the following:
 - State agricultural experiment stations;
 - colleges and universities;
 - university research foundations;
 - other research institutions and organizations;
 - Federal agencies;
 - national laboratories;
 - private organizations or corporations; and
 - individuals

How are Centers of Excellence Selected?

- Criteria for recognition as Center:
 - Ensure coordination and cost effectiveness by reducing unnecessarily duplicative efforts in research, teaching, and extension;
 - Leverage available resources by using public-private partnerships among agricultural industry groups, institutions of higher education, and the Federal Government;



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food
and Agriculture

INVESTING IN SCIENCE | SECURING OUR FUTURE | WWW.NIFA.USDA.GOV

- Implement teaching initiatives to increase awareness and effectively disseminate solutions to target audiences through extension;
- Increase economic returns to rural communities by identifying, attracting, and directing funds to high-priority agricultural issues; and
- Where practicable, include efforts to improve teaching capacity and infrastructure at colleges and universities



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food
and Agriculture

INVESTING IN SCIENCE | SECURING OUR FUTURE | WWW.NIFA.USDA.GOV

How Might NIFA Select Centers of Excellence?

- Use existing grant application process
 - Applicants self-identify, include justification for Agency consideration
 - Status would be specific to application
- Create request for designation process
 - Applicants request consideration, justify for area of science
 - Status could apply across programs to time period



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food
and Agriculture

INVESTING IN SCIENCE | SECURING OUR FUTURE | WWW.NIFA.USDA.GOV

How Might NIFA Provide Priority for Funding Centers?

- At time of application, if separate process
- During or as part of peer review, if justification included in application
- After peer review and only if “tie breaker” was needed relative to rankings



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food
and Agriculture

INVESTING IN SCIENCE | SECURING OUR FUTURE | WWW.NIFA.USDA.GOV

Additional Input Opportunities

- July 31 web-based listening session
 - 1 to 3pm EDT at <http://nifa-connect.nifa.usda.gov/frnce/>
 - Call-in number: 888-844-9904
 - Access code: 3702409#
- Written comments due by July 31
Email to vbtest@nifa.usda.gov