

NIFA in the News – Week of April 8, 2013

Curious as to what happens to all the news releases you see in the [NIFA newsroom](#)? Here's the weekly summary of NIFA's mentions in the news media for the week of April 8, 2013.

In the News

ASA: Impact of Continuing Resolution (Agri-View 4/4). In response to the signing into law of the Continuing Resolution (CR) by President Barack Obama, the American Soybean Association (ASA) has examined the ramifications for soybean farmers contained in the measure, which funds the federal government through the end of the 2013 fiscal year on Sept. 30. The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), a priority for ASA, was not only funded in the CR, but it was one of the few programs for which funding was increased. The program is now funded at \$274.8 million, \$10 million more than in FY2012. As a discretionary program, however, AFRI will be subject to USDA's 2.5 percent reduction within the next six months. Appropriations for research at land-grant universities (often called "capacity funding"), which fund ARS and extension activities, all suffered a cut of 7.61 percent from last year's funding levels. [Link](#)

Plans to renovate downtown railroad depot expand (Natchez Democrat 4/5).

After a brainstorming session and a tour of the site Thursday, Mississippi State University representatives are hoping to hop on board with the plans to renovate the downtown railroad depot and relocate the Natchez Farmers Market to the bluff. Preliminary plans include constructing an open-air pavilion for the Alcorn State extension program's farmers market and turning the depot into a public product development facility with a demonstration kitchen. Alcorn's funding comes from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Mississippi State does not have access to those funds, but there may be USDA discretionary funds that Alcorn and MSU could obtain through a cooperative effort for the project. [Link](#)

UAS Sitka offers teacher workshop to get kids excited about science (Juneau Empire 4/5). The University of Alaska Southeast Sitka Campus will offer a three-day workshop on June 5-7 called "Educators and Scientists: Putting our heads together to get kids excited about science." This workshop is offered in partnership with the UAS Sitka Campus Fisheries Technology and Understanding Pacific Pathways programs. It is funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture program Taking Aquaculture and Marine Education. [Link](#)

Kensok honored (Bismarck Tribune 4/7). A Casselton elementary school teacher is

one of five educators chosen for a prestigious national honor for her work in teaching agricultural concepts in her curricula. Mary Kensok, a fourth-grade teacher at Central Cass Elementary, will receive the “Excellence in Teaching about Agriculture” award at the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference, scheduled for June 25-28 in Minneapolis. The award is presented annually by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the National Agriculture in the Classroom Organization. [Link](#)

Obama looks again to drop crop insurance (UPI 4/10). The White House budget proposal released Wednesday includes \$22.6 billion in discretionary spending for the department, the equivalent to the 2012 level enacted by Congress. The proposal presented to Congress calls for spending \$4 billion for renewable energy and environmental improvement loans and \$383 million for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, a \$119 million increase over the 2012 enacted level. [Link](#)

In Time of Austerity, President’s 2014 Budget Prioritizes Clean Energy Funding (National Law Review 4/10). After two months of delay, the Obama Administration released its proposed 2014 budget on April 11. Competitive research grants targeting human nutrition, bioenergy, sustainable agriculture, and climate change under the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative would see an increase of \$119 million (over 2012 enacted levels) to \$383 million. [Link](#)

President's Budget Proposal Includes Increase to Ag and Environmental Research (Newsweek 4/10). The Obama Administration rolled out a multi-trillion-dollar budget proposal for fiscal year 2014 today (Apr. 10). Encouragingly, the President’s budget proposal includes increases in funding for several key agriculture and natural resources-related research programs. Several research programs within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) received budget increases for FY14. The administration is proposing the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), the competitive research program within USDA, receive \$383 million, an increase of \$93 million over the FY13 budget levels. [Link](#)

UAS Sitka offers teacher workshop to get kids excited about science (Capital City Weekly 4/10). The University of Alaska Southeast Sitka Campus will offer a three-day workshop June 5-7 called "Educators and Scientists: Putting our heads together to get kids excited about science." It is funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture program Taking AME (Aquaculture and Marine Education). [Link](#)

Wheat presses need for consistent research funding (Wheatworld.org 4/10). As policymakers struggle to set federal funding priorities for the coming years and craft a new, five-year farm bill, wheat researchers, farmers, millers and bakers are on Capitol Hill together, pressing the importance of long-term and stable agriculture research funding. Participants are telling their own stories about the impact of crop research on their sector and specifically asking members of Congress to support the Obama Administration’s FY2014 request of \$1.124 billion for USDA’s Agricultural Research

Service and \$383 million in funding for USDA's premier competitive grant programs, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). [Link](#)

Blue-Ear Pig Disease is Target of Genetic Study (Stackyard 4/11). A transatlantic research group is to tackle Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS), which leads to reproductive failure in breeding stock and causes respiratory tract illness in young pigs. Researchers at The Roslin Institute, at the University of Edinburgh, are working with Iowa State University, which has received a \$3 million grant, to find ways to tackle this devastating virus. The \$3 million grant to look into PRRS was awarded by the US Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, while The Roslin Institute receives strategic funding from the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council. [Link](#)

ASA To President Obama: Now Is Not The Time For Cuts To Crop Insurance (CropLife 4/11). Proposed cuts to crop insurance and a restructuring of the nation's food aid programs drew criticism from the nation's soybean farmers today as the American Soybean Association (ASA) weighed in on the proposed 2014 budget from President Barack Obama. Murphy did point out that not all was negative in the President's budget. Several of ASA's top priorities were reflected in the proposal, including both agricultural research and infrastructure. "A significant positive in the budget is the investment in agricultural research, including \$383 million for competitive grants through the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)," Murphy said. [Link](#)

TSU to break ground on \$4M teaching, research facility (Nashville Post 4/11). Tennessee State University will break ground Wednesday, April 17, on a \$4 million teaching and research facility at the Agricultural Research & Educational Center on the main campus, the university announced today. Funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture through its National Institute of Food and Agriculture, the development will include a field research support building, an agricultural education building, an equipment shed, and a pesticide storage facility. [Link](#)

Agricultural research funding vital to wheat industry (Western Farm Press 4/12). As policymakers struggle to set federal funding priorities for the coming years and craft a new, five-year farm bill, wheat researchers, farmers, millers and bakers are on Capitol Hill together, pressing the importance of long-term and stable agriculture research funding. Fly-in participants are telling their own stories about the impact of crop research on their sector and specifically asking Members of Congress to support the Obama Administration's FY2014 request of \$1.124 billion for USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and \$383 million in funding for USDA's premier competitive grant programs, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). [Link](#)

Presidential Budget Keeps USDA Funding Steady (Farm Futures 4/12). President Obama Wednesday released his proposal for the FY14 budget, keeping agriculture spending relatively unchanged but announcing funding shifts that will ultimately

affect many USDA programs. Research efforts will also see increased funding; the budget requests \$383 million for competitive grants through the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, which will support regional research projects involving federal, university and industry partners. [Link](#)

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