

# **Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program – Methyl Bromide Transition**

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***FY 2014 Request for Applications***

***APPLICATION DEADLINE: May 6, 2014***



**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

**National Institute of Food and Agriculture**

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program – Methyl Bromide Transition-**

**INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

**CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE:** This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.303, Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program.

**DATES:** Applications must be received by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on May 6, 2014**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding (see Part IV, C. of this RFA). Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within 6 months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

**STAKEHOLDER INPUT:** The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) seeks your comments about this RFA. We will consider the comments when we develop the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and we'll use them 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)). Submit written stakeholder comments by the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this Notice to: Policy and Oversight Division; Office of Grants and Financial Management; National Institute of Food and Agriculture; USDA; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: [Policy@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:Policy@nifa.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 fiscal year 2014 Methyl Bromide Transition RFA.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** NIFA requests applications for the Methyl Bromide Transition Grants Program (MBT) for fiscal year (FY) 2014 to support the discovery and implementation of practical pest management alternatives to methyl bromide. The United States has requested critical use exemption nominations for the past 10 years. During the 2008-2015 timeframe, all but three critical uses have been phased out (dry-cured ham, dates, and California strawberries).

Critical uses that have been phased off from methyl bromide between 2008 and 2014 include the following: post-harvest use on commodities and food processing plants; and pre-plant use on cucurbit, eggplant, fruit, nut and flower nurseries; forest seedlings; orchard replant; cut flower, bulb, and herbaceous perennial ornamentals; peppers; tomatoes and sweet potato slips; strawberries grown in the following states: California, Florida, Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia and Virginia;

strawberry nurseries in California and the southeastern United States (Maryland, North Carolina, and Tennessee). Although methyl bromide is no longer available for these commodities and uses, effective alternative pest management strategies are not available in some circumstances. Applications that address the 2015 critical use exemptions (dry-cured ham, dates, and California strawberries) and/or work towards implementable solutions for commodities now removed from methyl bromide access, as well as alternatives for quarantine and pre-shipment will be accepted for this program. Research on non-fumigant alternatives is encouraged.

Pursuant to H.R. 3547, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014, the amount available to support this program in FY 21014 is approximately \$1.8 million.

This notice identifies the objectives for MBT projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a MBT grant.

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

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

Section 406 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) (7 U.S.C. 7626), as reauthorized by Section 7306 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA) (Pub. L. 110-246), authorized the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a competitive grants program that provides funding for integrated, multifunctional agricultural research, extension, and education activities. Subject to the availability of appropriations to carry out this program, the Secretary may award grants to colleges and universities (as defined by section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) (7 U.S.C. 3103)), as amended, on a competitive basis for projects that address priorities in United States agriculture and involve integrated research, education, and extension activities, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board.

Section 7206 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 amended section 406(b) of AREERA to add the 1994 land-grant institutions as eligible to apply for grants under this authority.

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

This RFA solicits applications for the Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program, Methyl Bromide Transition (MBT). Methyl bromide has been a pest and disease control tactic used in agricultural, industrial, natural resource and urban pest management systems for decades. The MBT program seeks to solve pest problems in key agricultural production and post-harvest management systems, processing facilities, and transport systems for which methyl bromide has been withdrawn or withdrawal is imminent. Proposals must integrate research and extension activities, or be extension only and be designed to provide transitional alternatives which address immediate needs that have resulted from the loss of availability of methyl bromide. The pressure to completely phase-out methyl bromide has created an urgent need for new economical and effective pest control tactics to control soil-borne and postharvest pests, and pests that must be controlled by the processing and shipping industries to meet regulatory standards.

Applications submitted to the MBT program should consider the integrated pest management (IPM) concepts of prevention, avoidance, monitoring, and suppression of pest populations. The projects funded will cover a broad range of new methodologies, technologies, systems and strategies for controlling economically important pests for which methyl bromide has been the only effective pest control option. Systems solutions or strategic (multi-tactic) approaches should be considered rather than reliance on any single tactic, and non-fumigant options should be evaluated where possible.

Promising alternatives to methyl bromide must be evaluated under commercial conditions for multiple years to ensure that positive results are not due, in part, to low pest pressure following many years of methyl bromide fumigation. In addition, weather conditions and other factors have a marked influence on pest pressure. Alternatives that give acceptable efficacy under favorable weather and soil conditions may fail in other years when weather and soil conditions are less favorable. The potential for emergence of unexpected pests and pathogens, in the absence of methyl bromide, must be determined. Performance must be consistent over several production cycles and be technically and economically feasible when scaled-up from research-scale plots to commercial scale. Projects should focus on enhancing grower/industrial user knowledge and adoption of appropriate methyl bromide replacement strategies through extension outreach and demonstrations relevant to real-world systems. It is important that project proposals consider: (1) the evolving science and technology; (2) the potential range of pest control practices available; (3) the risk mitigation and pest management needs of targeted users; (4) a clear plan for technology and knowledge transfer to the affected user group; and (5) an economic analysis of the new or proposed technology that highlights the efficacy and cost of management trade-offs relative to methyl bromide.

It is anticipated that the projects funded by the MBT program will result in methyl bromide alternatives that are not only effective, but also scalable and economically feasible. As methyl bromide for experimental use is also being phased out, economic analyses of cost effectiveness of proposed alternatives against other commercial options and non-treated controls will be necessary to determine the economic feasibility of the alternatives. Comprehensive information is required on the impact of such alternatives on efficacy and profit margins. Methyl bromide may not be available for use in experimental controls. Therefore, investigators must describe experimental protocols comparing currently available and new technologies against null controls. Integrated projects regarding transition to an alternative type of cropping/storage/processing system that avoids the need for disinfestation with methyl bromide (e.g., transition to a covered system using soil-less culture), will be considered if the alternative has the potential to serve as a viable short- to medium-term solution for operations that are currently dependent on methyl bromide. Specific economic criteria should be addressed in projects, such as are defined in project requirements starting on page 7.

In addition, proposals to evaluate the economics of regional to national-scale pest management impacts of loss of methyl bromide on any given commodity or value-chain are welcome. Economic studies to evaluate pest-specific yield losses or costs of operation changes after the phase out of methyl bromide will be considered. These studies must evaluate commercial conditions for multiple years to provide a robust picture of outcomes of transitions from methyl bromide to help guide future research needs.

**Project Director Meeting.** If a project is funded, at least one member of the project team will be required to attend the annual International Methyl Bromide Alternatives Conference ([www.mbao.org](http://www.mbao.org)) starting with the second year of funding. For the purposes

of budget development, applicants are required to request funds to support participation in at least one MBAO conference or an approved alternative. The request for these funds should be clearly indicated in the budget and budget narrative sections of the application.

### **C. Program Area Description**

The primary goal of the MBT program is to support the discovery and implementation of practical pest management alternatives to methyl bromide. Methyl bromide (MeBr) is an odorless, colorless gas that is used as an agricultural soil and structural fumigant to control a wide variety of pests. Methyl bromide depletes the stratospheric ozone layer and is classified as a Class I ozone-depleting substance. In accordance with the *Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer* and the Clean Air Act ([www.epa.gov/air/caa](http://www.epa.gov/air/caa)), the United States government agreed to reduce methyl bromide production and net imports incrementally from the 1991 baseline until the complete phase-out in 2005. Since 2005, the only allowable exemptions are critical use exemptions (CUE) and quarantine and pre-shipment exemptions (QPS). By 2015, only dry cured ham, dates, and California strawberries will be able to use methyl bromide under CUE. Critical uses have been approved by the Parties to the Montreal Protocol when an applicant demonstrates, among other things, that the absence of methyl bromide would result in a significant market disruption and that there are no technically and economically feasible alternatives. To support a CUE, there must be an active research program seeking viable alternatives to methyl bromide for that specific use.

In FY 2014, the MBT program seeks applications for projects to ensure that economically viable and environmentally sound alternatives to methyl bromide are in place and available as soon as possible for crops or uses that have had a CUE from 2008– 2015 and are facing new and re-emerging pest issues due to the loss of methyl bromide. These commodities include:

#### **Post-harvest use on -**

- Commodities such as walnuts, dried fruit, dates, and dried beans;
- Structures/food processing plants;
- Facilities; or
- Dry cured pork products.

#### **Pre-plant use on -**

- Cucurbits grown in open fields;
- Eggplant grown in open fields;
- Fruit, nut and flower nurseries;
- Forest seedlings;
- Orchard replant;
- Cut flower, bulb, and herbaceous perennial ornamentals;
- Peppers;
- Strawberries grown for fruit and in nurseries;
- Tomatoes;

- Potato slips; or
- Turf.

Applications that address the critical needs will also be accepted for the development of methyl bromide alternatives for quarantine and pre-shipment clearances.

The MBT program emphasizes commercial or field-scale research targeting short to medium term solutions that will develop new alternatives, may result in registration and adoption of new alternatives. Proposals addressing chemical and/or non-chemical methyl bromide alternatives will be evaluated based on their potential to contribute to such solutions. Large scale trials will be a key component of successful proposals, as they may identify variability, technical problems, and pest relationships to marketable yields that are not evident in small plot trials. Repeat of research for two or more cropping/production seasons or trials is encouraged. Comprehensive information on the impact of alternatives on efficacy of pest control and profit margins is the key objective of the MBT program. The primary objective is to discover alternatives for commodities with CUEs and those that were phased off of methyl bromide since 2008. A secondary objective is to provide an industry or commodity-specific evaluation of the state of the commodity, evaluating pest pressures and costs of management in the absence of methyl bromide. These types of proposals will be described as state of the commodity projects throughout the RFA.

#### **Other Requirements:**

- **Economic analysis.** All projects must include an economic analysis with direct comparison of cost effectiveness of proposed alternatives in the absence of methyl bromide to no treatment. For the remaining commodities with 2015 CUEs, comprehensive information on the impact of such alternatives on efficacy of pest management and profit margins compared with methyl bromide fumigation is required. Profit margins should be calculated with and without the new technology (the status quo case). Additionally, an analysis of overall transition cost to a new technology, from acquisition of materials and knowledge to efficacy metrics, is required. Analyses of profit margins should include information on the cost calculation; the cost/amount of fumigant or new technology used, the value of the labor used, and any equipment needed for the application (including personal protective equipment, tarps, drip tape, etc.). A distinction should be made between one-time costs as part of the transition (e.g., the purchase of a piece of equipment or the construction of a structure) and recurring treatment costs (fumigant, tarps, etc.). Include an assessment of the differences in the quantity and/or quality of product produced, using metrics such as more fruit, larger fruit, fewer blemishes, greater yield, etc. Changes in revenues should also be identified (e.g., changes in the commodity price or more importantly, changes in quantity of the available commodity for marketing). Assessment of other impacts of alternative treatments, such as environmental impacts, the influence of environmental conditions on application procedures or product performance, the potential for products to damage equipment, or product phytotoxicity. Recognition of possible regulatory

constraints that could impact the use of alternative treatments is an important concern. Repetition of research for two or more cropping/production seasons or trials is encouraged. Integrated projects to support the transition to an alternative type of cropping/storage/processing system that avoids the need for disinfestation with methyl bromide (e.g., transition to a covered system using soilless culture) will be considered if the alternative has the potential to serve as a viable short to medium term solution for operations that are currently dependent on methyl bromide.

- **Clear statement of relevance to the RFA.** Applicants must provide a justification statement in the Project Narrative (see Part IV, B. for more information) to explain how their work is applicable to the critical commodities and value chains identified in the Program Area Description. Proposals do not have to address all the pests for the commodity. Proposed projects may provide alternatives for management of one or more pests or limiting situations that may be potentially included in an integrated pest management system. Proposals that are specific to the commodities with a 2015 critical use exemption (dry-cured ham, dates, and strawberry fruit) must include a clear and in depth analysis of efficacy of alternatives and the economics of transition. Proposals may also be submitted for on-going development of alternatives for commodities that have already been phased off of methyl bromide. Finally, proposals are requested for state of the commodity projects evaluating current pest management challenges and the economics of pest management for commodities/processes that have lost the ability to use methyl bromide in the past seven years. State of commodity projects are expected to create a publically accessible report within a year of the project end date.
- **Integrated projects require two of the science functions.** If you are submitting an application for an integrated grant (see Part II, C. for more information) research and extension must be incorporated into the proposed project and (as a general rule) no more than two thirds of the project's budget should be devoted to any one function. Formal extension programs to expedite adoption of proposed alternatives must be clearly delineated in the proposal and funding for these activities should be clearly outlined in the Budget Narrative. Research should address either commodities with 2015 critical use exemptions or critical pest management issues in commodities/processes that have been phased off of methyl bromide since 2008. The expectation is that some research may lead to a new product registration. The research will result in direct efficacy and economic outcome information given existing or new technological alternatives as compared to no treatment. Extension programs, such as field demonstrations, grower trials, workshops, and distributed information, should result in commercial awareness, understanding and adoption of new technology and alternatives to methyl bromide fumigation.
- **Timelines for completion of each major objective in the application.** Timelines for completion of the major objectives in the application must be explicitly described for the entire project period, ranging from one to three years from the start date. Experiments are expected to be replicated in at least two separate trials and results are to be extended to the relevant user community as part of the program within the program timeline.

- **Logic Model.** Applicants are encouraged to submit a logic model that details the activities, outputs, and outcomes (learning, action and condition) of the proposed project. This information may be provided as a narrative or formatted into a logic model chart. More information and resources related to the logic model planning process are provided at:  
[www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/integrated/integrated\\_logic\\_model.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/integrated/integrated_logic_model.html) and  
[www.ipm.gov/LogicModels/index.cfm](http://www.ipm.gov/LogicModels/index.cfm).

## Methyl Bromide Transition Logic Model

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact		
	Participants	Activities and Products	Short	Medium	Long
Annual appropriations USDA coordination USDA intra-agency coordination U.S. government interagency coordination Program Directors Support Staff Panel Managers Review Panel members Stakeholder and partner comments	Stakeholders Producers and processors Commodity groups General public Colleges and universities Cooperative extension University scientists and extension specialists State agencies Federal agencies USDA-NIFA	Respond to authorization and appropriation Publish RFA Recruit panel managers and peer review panelists Conduct peer review panel meetings Award funds to meritorious applications Promote the development of alternatives to methyl bromide Communicate positive outcome to key stakeholders Collect and communicate impact data State of the commodity reports	Gap analysis reveals research needs New options for management of commodity pests Existing knowledge adapted to commodity systems Current knowledge is applied to a strategic plan to eliminate methyl bromide between commodity producer and processors and researchers Best management practices available for Extension to communicate stakeholders New knowledge applied to an evolving strategic plan	New alternatives to methyl bromide, both chemical and nonchemical increasing in usage Best management practices for pest management adopted New technologies and innovations for producers and processors being implemented Economic feasibility and effective methyl bromide alternatives in use	Pests are controlled economically without the use of methyl bromide, complying with the Montreal Protocol and Clean Air Act No further Critical Use Nominations (CUNs)/Critical Use Exemptions (CUE) are needed Increased production due to reduced pest losses Reduces environmental risks from environmentally damaging pest control methods Continued production of safe, affordable, and high-quality commodities U.S. production practices adopt appropriate alternatives to methyl bromide, assuring U.S. producers a competitive place in the global marketplace
<b>Assumptions</b> Proposals will address commodities that have had a CUE from 2008-2015 Multidisciplinary teams include economic analysis of the tested alternative Integrated projects provide best management practices to producers and processors Methyl Bromide may no longer be available for experimental use.			<b>External Factors</b> Congressional funding/appropriations EPA Pesticide Registration Montreal Protocol and Clean Air Act MBTOC decisions		

**The following resources may be useful in developing Methyl Bromide Transition applications:**

In addition to the information contained in the 2015 Critical Use Nominations (CUNs), a matrix of alternatives identified by the United Nations technical committees for methyl bromide is available at [www.epa.gov/ozone/mbr/alts.html](http://www.epa.gov/ozone/mbr/alts.html). While not all of the alternatives listed by the United Nations are currently available to the agricultural and structural industries in the United States, some do have potential to control pests currently controlled by methyl bromide. Integration of specific controls into current production systems will depend on availability, efficacy, logistics, economics, and grower acceptance. In all these cases, combinations of chemical and non-chemical materials and methods will likely be the most efficacious. It is unlikely that there will be one alternative for all of the uses of methyl bromide, but there may be several specific pest control tools that can manage specific pests currently controlled with methyl bromide when used as part of an overall integrated pest management program. EPA has published 30 case studies which describe potential alternatives to the use of methyl bromide.

Background information and an overview of the search for alternatives to methyl bromide are available in *Alternatives to Methyl Bromide: A Florida Perspective* (E. N. Roskopf et al.), which is available at [www.apsnet.org/publications/apsnetfeatures/Pages/MethylAlternatives.aspx](http://www.apsnet.org/publications/apsnetfeatures/Pages/MethylAlternatives.aspx).

The MBT program encourages projects that develop content and programs suitable for delivery through the Cooperative Extension System's eXtension Initiative. You may use funds to contribute to existing Communities of Practice (CoP) or to form a new CoP focused on methyl bromide alternatives extension and outreach activities. Projects must align with the eXtension vision, mission, and values. You must have a letter of acknowledgement from eXtension; you may also need a letter of support from one or more of the Communities of Practice. For detailed guidance on how to partner with eXtension, go to <http://create.extension.org/node/2057>.

## **PART II—AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. Available Funding**

Pursuant to H.R. 3547, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014, the amount available to support the MBT program in FY 2014 will be approximately \$1.8 million. There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

Awards issued as a result of this RFA will have designated the Automated Standard Applications for Payment System (ASAP), operated by the Department of Treasury's Financial Management Service, as the payment system for funds. For more information see [www.nifa.usda.gov/business/method\\_of\\_payment.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/method_of_payment.html).

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

In FY 2014, you may submit applications to the MBT Program as one of the following types of requests:

**(1) New application.** This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the MBT Program. We will review all new applications competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

**(2) Resubmitted application.** This is an application that had previously been submitted to the MBT Program but not funded. Project Directors (PDs) must respond to the previous review panel summary (see Response to Previous Review, Part IV). Resubmitted applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

### **C. Project Types**

Three grant types are being solicited in this RFA. Applicants may submit a proposal for each type; however, when applicants submit three applications they must be completely independent of one another and execution of the project should not rely on funding for the second application. All grants must include specifics about how economic analyses will be conducted and how the project will be relevant to the needs of the commodities that are/have transitioned from methyl bromide:

- 1) Integrated grants. These grants must include research and extension functions. For FY 2014, maximum project budget and acceptable project periods for integrated MBT grants are \$500,000 total for projects up to three years duration.

- 2) State of the Commodity grants. These integrated research and extension grants are to provide in depth scientific and economic system review of transition from methyl bromide for a given commodity or process (from those among the Critical Uses between 2008 and 2015). The project should evaluate pest management options, yield changes, and changes in farm income that are the result of having been phased out of methyl bromide. The successful grants of this type must be as inclusive as necessary to address the U.S. situation or a regional consideration. State of the commodity grants proposals can request up to \$100,000 for three year duration, and are expected to describe the planned outlet of review information.
- 3) Extension grants. Extension may be the sole function. There is a great deal of knowledge that has been created through the past several years of research. Projects may focus on changing methyl bromide use practices and developing tools to improve the understanding of existing data. Applications are solicited that propose practical extension projects that promote new technologies or integrated pest management solutions to assist industry stakeholders to transition from methyl bromide to alternatives. The development and implementation of best management practices and focused conferences to achieve this goal are examples of this type of grant. A maximum of \$250,000 total may be requested for Extension projects up to three years duration. Extension Conference grants are further limited to \$50,000 total for one year duration.

#### **D. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research**

The responsible and ethical conduct of research (RCR) is critical for excellence, as well as public trust, in science and engineering. Consequently, we consider education in RCR essential to the preparation of future scientists. In accordance with sections 2, 3, and 8 of 7 CFR Part 3022, institutions that conduct USDA-funded extramural research must foster an atmosphere conducive to research integrity, bear primary responsibility for prevention and detection of research misconduct, and maintain and effectively communicate and train their staff regarding policies and procedures. In the event an application to NIFA results in an award, the Authorized Representative (AR) assures, through acceptance of the award that the institution will comply with the above requirements. Per award terms and conditions, grant recipients shall, upon request, make available to NIFA the policies, procedures, and to support the conduct of the training.

Note that the training referred to herein shall be either on-campus or off-campus training. The general content of the ethics training will, at a minimum, emphasize three key areas of research ethics: authorship and plagiarism, data and research integration, and reporting misconduct. Each institution will be responsible for developing its own training system, as schools will need flexibility to develop training tailored to their specific student needs. Grantees should consider the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) program for RCR (<https://www.citiprogram.org/rcrpage.asp>). Typically this RCR education addresses the topics of: Data Acquisition and Management - collection, accuracy, security, access; Authorship and Publication; Peer Review; Mentor/Trainee

Responsibilities; Collaboration; Conflict of Interest; Research Misconduct; Human Subject Research; and Use of Animals in Research.

## **PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **A. Eligible Applicants**

Applications may only be submitted by colleges and universities (as defined in section 1404 of NARETPA) (7 U.S.C. 3103) to the Methyl Bromide Transition (MBT) Competitive Grants Program. Section 1404 of NARETPA was amended by section 7101 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA) to define Hispanic-serving Agricultural Colleges and Universities (HSACUs) (see Part III, B. and Part VIII, E. for more information), and to include research foundations maintained by eligible colleges or universities.

For the purposes of this program, the terms “college” and “university” mean an educational institution in any state which (1) 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; (2) is legally authorized within such state to provide a program of education beyond secondary education; (3) provides an educational program for which a bachelor’s degree or any other higher degree is awarded; (4) is a public or other nonprofit institution; and (5) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association. Applications also may be submitted by 1994 Land-Grant Institutions (see Part VIII, E. for more information), HSACUs, and research foundations maintained by eligible colleges or universities.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project. Failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of application deadline may result in the application being excluded from consideration or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude NIFA from making an award.

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

If a grant provides a particular benefit to a specific agricultural commodity, the grant recipient is required to match the USDA funds awarded on a dollar-for-dollar basis from non-Federal sources with cash and/or in-kind contributions. (See Part IV, B., 6. for details.)

NIFA may waive the matching funds requirement for a grant if NIFA determines that: (1) the results of the project, while of particular benefit to a specific agricultural commodity, are likely to be applicable to agricultural commodities generally; or (2) the project involves a minor commodity, the project deals with scientifically important research, and the grant recipient is unable to satisfy the matching funds requirement.

## **PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **A. Electronic Application Package**

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to NIFA in response to this RFA. We urge you to submit early to the Grants.gov system. For an overview of the Grants.gov application process see [www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/grant-application-process.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/grant-application-process.html).

#### **New Users of Grants.gov**

Prior to preparing an application, we recommend 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 Grants.gov. If not (e.g., the institution/organization is new to the electronic grant application process through Grants.gov), then the one-time registration process must be completed PRIOR to submitting an application. It can take as long as 2 weeks to complete the registration process so it is critical to begin as soon as possible. In such situations, the AR should go to **“Register” in the top right corner of the Grants.gov web page (or go to [www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html)) for information on registering the institution/organization with Grants.gov.** Item 2. below mentions the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.” Part II.1. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide contains additional explanatory language regarding the registration process.

#### **Steps to Obtain Application Package Materials**

To receive application materials:

1. You must download and install a version of Adobe Reader compatible with Grants.gov to access, complete, and submit applications. For basic system requirements and download instructions, see [www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/software/adobe-reader-compatibility.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/software/adobe-reader-compatibility.html). Grants.gov has a test package that will help you determine whether your current version of Adobe Reader is compatible.
2. To obtain the application package from Grants.gov, go to [www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html). Under Step 1 click on “Download a Grant Application Package,” and enter the funding opportunity number **USDA-NIFA-ICGP-004511** 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 “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.” 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 you require assistance to access the application package** (e.g., downloading or navigating Adobe forms) **or submitting the application**, refer to resources available on the Grants.gov website ([www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-resources.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-resources.html)). Grants.gov assistance is also available at:

Grants.gov customer support  
800-518-4726 Toll-Free or 606-545-5035  
Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed on [federal holidays](#).  
Email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

Grants.gov iPortal: Top 10 requested help topics (FAQs), Searchable knowledge base, self-service ticketing and ticket status, and live web chat (available 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. ET). Get help now!

Have the following information available when contacting Grants.gov:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Name of agency you are applying to
- Specific area of concern

See [www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html) for additional resources for applying electronically.

## **B. Content and Form of Application Submission**

You should prepare electronic applications following Parts V and VI of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed to prepare an application in response to this RFA. **If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.**

**Note the attachment requirements (e.g., PDF) in Part III section 3. of the guide. ANY PROPOSALS THAT ARE NON-COMPLIANT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS (e.g., content format, PDF file format, file name restrictions, and no password protected files) WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM NIFA REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from NIFA review. We will accept subsequent submissions of an application until close of business on the closing date in the RFA (see Part V, 2.1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further information).**

**Grants.gov provides online tools to assist if you do not own PDF-generating software. You will find PDF conversion software at**

<http://test.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/software/pdf-conversion-software.html>.

**For any questions related to the preparation of an application,** review the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide and the applicable RFA. If assistance is still needed for preparing application forms content, contact:

- Email: [electronic@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:electronic@nifa.usda.gov)
- Phone: 202-401-5048
- Business hours: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. ET, excluding federal holidays.

**1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

**2. SF 424 R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s)**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 3. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

**3. R&R Other Project Information Form**

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

**a. Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract.** The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of MBT. See Part V. 4.7 of NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further instructions and a link to a suggested template.

**b. Field 8. Project Narrative.**

NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 20 pages of written text regardless of whether it is single- or double-spaced and up to five additional pages for figures and tables. We have established this maximum (25 pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following.

a. Introduction: Include information on the following in the order identified:

(1) A concise statement of the long-term goal(s) of the proposed project (Integrated, State of the Commodity, or Extension);

(2) Summarize the body of knowledge or past activities that substantiate the need for the proposed project including information about or reference to the specific critical issue pest management strategy or similar document with identifiable stakeholder input;

(3) Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities or publications related to the proposed activity including the work of key project personnel. Include preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed project;

(4) Provide estimates of the magnitude of the issues and their relevance to stakeholders and ongoing state-federal food and agricultural research, education, and extension programs. Applicants must identify and review the efficacy and economics of the tactics currently being used in the targeted cropping/industrial use system, then define opportunities for new approaches and costs of transition from methyl bromide;

(5) Describe the stakeholders who have identified the problem and how they will be involved in the implementation of project results. Input from stakeholders should be considered in developing a management plan that will result in measureable improvements in the problem area being investigated. The composition or approach may differ among integrated and extension projects;

(5) State of the commodity proposals should describe how commodity stakeholders will be recruited into the study, the methods of data collection and analysis, and where the data will be presented and published.

(6) Conference proposals must define the purpose and the expectation for added value;

(7) Response to previous review is required for applications previously submitted to the MBT program but not funded. Project directors must respond to the previous review panel summary on no more than one page. Please include previous proposal number, if possible.

b. Objectives (Integrated or Extension):

(1) Provide a brief review of the goal(s) stated in the Introduction; and

(2) Present a clear, concise set of project objectives including cost/benefit analysis of new approaches. For Extension projects: what is the value of adopting the new technology?

c. Methods: Explicitly describe the procedures by objective for the proposed effort, include:

(1) Techniques and methods to be employed, including their efficacy and economic feasibility and rationale for their use in this project;

(2) Timeline for proposed project. Applicants must provide milestones and verifiable indicators to measure progress;

- (3) Means by which any proposed research results and extension activities will be evaluated. Applicants must describe plans to evaluate the outreach component, including means by which data will be analyzed and interpreted, and details of plans to communicate results to stakeholders and the public;
- (4) Description of stakeholder involvement in identification of project priorities, their implementation and adoption; and
- (5) Description of anticipated results or expected outcomes. Applicants must provide milestones and verifiable indicators to measure impact across a broad range of criteria (e.g., a timeline for grower adoption of techniques that lead to production, economic, and environmental benefits).
- d. Project Timeline: The proposal should outline all important phases as a function of time, year by year, for the entire project, including periods beyond the grant funding period.
- e. Cooperation and institutional involvement: Cooperative, multi-institutional and multidisciplinary applications are encouraged. Where applicable, identify each institutional unit contributing to the project and designate the lead institution or institutional unit. Clearly define the programmatic roles, responsibilities and budget for each institutional partner.
- f. Progress on previous projects: Provide a summary of previously funded MBT work from all sources, progress toward completion, general conclusions and remaining funds balances.

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

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 5. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. This section of the Guide includes information about the people who require a Senior/Key Person Profile, and details about the Biographical Sketch and the Current and Pending Support, including a link to a suggested template for the Current and Pending Support.

**5. R&R Personal Data** – As noted in Part V, 6. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide, the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award.

#### **6. R&R Budget**

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 7. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

For grants that require matching funds as specified under Part III, B., the Budget Narrative should include written verification of commitments of matching support

(including both cash and in-kind contributions) from third parties. Written verification means:

(a) For any third party cash contributions, a separate pledge agreement for each donation, signed by the authorized representatives of the donor organization (and the applicant organization ONLY if provided after submission of the application), must include: (1) The donor's name, address, and telephone number; (2) the name of the applicant organization; (3) the title of the project; (4) the dollar amount of the cash donation (the budget narrative must describe how the cash donation will be used); (5) a statement that the donor will pay the cash contribution during the grant period; and (6) whether the applicant can designate cash as the applicant deems necessary or the cash contribution has been designated to a particular budget item.

(b) For any third party in-kind contributions, a separate pledge agreement for each contribution, signed by the authorized representatives of the donor organization (and the applicant organization ONLY if provided after submission of the application), must include: (1) The donor's name, address, and telephone number; (2) the name of the applicant organization; (3) the title of the project; (4) a good faith estimate of the current fair market value of the third party in-kind contribution and a description of how the fair market value was determined; and (5) a statement that the donor will make the contribution during the grant period.

Summarize on a separate page the sources and amount of all matching support from outside the applicant institution and place that information in the proposal as part of the Budget Narrative. You must place all pledge agreements in the proposal immediately following the summary of matching support.

Establish the value of applicant contributions in accordance with applicable cost principles. Refer to OMB Circular A-21 (2 CFR Part 220), Cost Principles for Educational Institutions, for further guidance and other requirements relating to matching and allowable costs. **All contributions, including cash and third party in-kind, must meet the criteria included in section 23 of 7 CFR 3019, "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations."**

## **7. Supplemental Information Form**

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

- a. **Field 2. Program to which you are applying.** Enter the program code name "Methyl Bromide Transition" and the program code "112.C".
- b. **Field 8. Conflict of Interest List.** See Part VI, 1.8 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further instructions and a link to a suggested template.

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

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

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by COB on **May 6, 2014 (5 p.m. Eastern Time)**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

**If you have trouble submitting an application to Grants.gov, you should FIRST contact the Grants.gov Help Desk to resolve any problems. Keep a record of any such correspondence. See Part IV. A. for Grants.gov contact information.**

We send email correspondence to the AR regarding the status of submitted applications. 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 correspondence **from NIFA** regarding a submitted application within 30 days of the established deadline, contact the Agency 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 716 of the Consolidated Appropriation Act, 2014, limits indirect costs to 30 percent of the total Federal funds provided under each award. Therefore, when preparing budgets, you should limit your request for the recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of your institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 30 percent of total Federal funds awarded.

If your institution does not have, or cannot obtain, a negotiated rate, you must calculate an indirect cost rate in order to request indirect costs. You should calculate an indirect cost rate based on actual costs for the entire organization from the most recently completed accounting year. If no prior cost history exists, you should use budgeted costs for the entire organization. You should follow the example(s) found at: [http://nifa.usda.gov/business/indirect\\_cost\\_process.html](http://nifa.usda.gov/business/indirect_cost_process.html) for information regarding this process. You may elect not to charge indirect costs and, instead, use all grant funds for direct costs. If indirect costs are not charged, the phrase "None requested" should be written in this space."

You may not use grant funds awarded under this authority to renovate or refurbish research, education, or extension space; purchase or install fixed equipment in such space; or the plan, repair, rehabilitate, acquire, or construction of buildings or facilities.

## **E. Other Submission Requirements**

**You should follow the submission requirements noted in Part IV, section 1.9 in the document entitled “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.”**

For information about the **status of a submitted application**, see Part III., section 6. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

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

### **A. General**

We evaluate each application in a 2-part process. First, we screen each application to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, a review panel will technically evaluate applications that meet these requirements.

We select reviewers based upon their training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) The level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields; (c) the need to include as reviewers other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs; (d) the need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and federal agencies, and private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) the need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness to producers and the general public of each application.

### **B. Evaluation Criteria**

We will use the 105 point evaluation criteria below to review applications submitted in response to this RFA:

Proposals addressing chemical and/or non-chemical methyl bromide alternatives will be evaluated based on their description of the new alternatives, with respect to the economics of the transition, the impact of the new technology on the efficacy of pest control (relative to methyl bromide) and potential economic or physical impediments to adoption. The potential in fulfilling this larger goal will be evaluated based on: 1) Proposal merit and quality; 2) Qualifications of proposed project personnel, adequacy of facilities and budget; and 3) Proposal relevance and effectiveness with respect to analyzing adoptability and economic consequences of the transition.

#### **1. Proposal Merit and Quality (40 points):**

(a) Proposed project goal, approach, or hypothesis is conceptually adequate and addresses a stated program priority. Implementation of methyl bromide alternatives is clearly defined and appropriate extension activities to encourage adoption of alternatives are described. Formal extension and economic analysis to expedite adoption of proposed alternatives must be delineated in the form of a measurable, outcome oriented plan in the

proposal. State of the commodity proposals should document current conditions, successful coverage or gaps in pest management, yield changes and cost of management changes (good, bad or neutral) resulting from the phase out of methyl bromide for any specific commodity. Conference proposals should document the need for synthesizing, assimilating, and expediting the adoption of methyl bromide alternatives. (15 points)

(b) Need for the proposed project is demonstrated and target audience(s) identified. (5 points)

(c) Objectives are clearly described, adequate, and appropriate for the function of proposed project (research and extension, extension only). Project functions (i.e., research, extension) are reflected in the objectives. Integrated projects must include two functions. Conference proposals should clearly state the conferences objectives and need for a conference. State of the commodity proposals should clearly state objectives and need for scientific and economic system review. (5 points)

(d) Proposed techniques, procedures, or methodologies are clearly described, suitable, and feasible for proposed project, including the economic analysis. Time allotted for project completion is reasonable and all activities take place within the life of the project. Conference proposals must be completed within 12 months of award. (5 points)

(e) Expected results or outcomes are clearly stated, measurable, and achievable within the time frame of the project. State the potential commercial application and describe the costs (both fixed and recurring) of transition to the proposed alternative methods while comparing costs and efficacy of the commercially-used quantity of methyl bromide that might be replaced by the alternative methods. The proposal must include the potential timeline for replacement of the current critical use by the alternative methods proposed. (5 points)

(f) Articulation of a clear plan for managing the project, including how communication among members of the project team will be handled. (5 points)

## **2. Qualifications of Proposed Project Personnel, Adequacy of Facilities and Budget (35 points):**

(a) Evidence that project personnel have sufficient expertise to complete the proposed project is provided and roles of project personnel are clearly defined. Necessary expertise includes individuals with experience in economic analysis and technology transfer. (10 points)

(b) Multidisciplinary and multi-institutional collaboration is evident as appropriate. Relevant institutional experience and competence in the proposed area of work is evident. (10 points)

(c) Support personnel, facilities, and instrumentation are adequate. (5 points)

(d) Proposed budget is appropriate for the scope of the project or conference proposal. All functional areas of the project are appropriately and sufficiently funded (research and extension). Generally, in integrated projects, no more than two thirds of the project's budget should be devoted to any one function. If an integrated or extension project is funded, beginning in the second year of funding, at least one member of the project team will be required to attend an annual International Methyl Bromide Alternatives Conference ([www.mbao.org](http://www.mbao.org)) or an approved alternative. Reasonable travel expenses may be claimed as part of the project budget. (10 points)

### 3. Proposal Relevance and Effectiveness (30 points)

(a) Degree to which project functions to address the stated problem or issue and achieve measurable outcomes. (5 points)

**Integrated MBT projects** should include research and/or extension/outreach objectives. These include: a) hypothesis-driven research to fill knowledge gaps that are critical to the development of practices and programs to address the problem area; and/or b) an effective extension/outreach program that will lead to measurable behavior change in an identified audience or stakeholder group.

**Integrated State of the Commodity MBT projects** should provide in depth scientific and economic system review of impacts of methyl bromide transition for a given commodity or process. Proposals must provide the planned outlet for disseminating review information.

**Extension-only MBT projects** should facilitate implementation of practices to optimally manage pests in the absence of methyl bromide, leading to measurable behavior changes in the identified audience or stakeholder group. Conference proposals should focus on encouraging implementation of best management practice on a commercial scale.

(b) Extent to which the proposed work addresses stakeholder-identified critical issues that have become increasing problems in the absence of methyl bromide. Integrated projects focus on commercial or field scale research targeting short- to medium-term solutions that will evaluate new alternatives, result in registration and application of new alternatives, and contain comprehensive information on the impact of alternatives on crop yields, sanitation efficacy, and profit margins over time. Repeat of research for two or more cropping/production seasons or trials is encouraged. Extension-only projects will focus outreach to producers and processors to deliver best management practices and integrated pest management which provides effective and economic disease management. Conference proposals will focus on outreach to stakeholders and extension personnel to encourage adoption of best management practices. State of the commodity proposals will focus on pest management and economic impacts and consequences of loss of methyl bromide on a specific commodity. (5 points)

(c) Extent to which stakeholders and/or end users were/will be involved in problem identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Project should include a management plan (developed with input from stakeholder advisory groups) that leads to measurable improvements in the problem area. Documentation of interaction is expected in the proposal. Conference proposals should indicate audience and demonstrate how information disseminated will improve production in the absence of methyl bromide. (5 points)

(d) Suitability and feasibility of plan and methods for evaluating success of project activities (i.e., measurable outcomes) and documenting potential impact. (5 points)

(e) Potential to affect adoption of methyl bromide alternatives (10 points)

- Research outcomes should provide relevant information concerning the availability, cost considerations and pest control efficacy of practices and technologies to address the stated problem or issue.
- Extension outcomes should lead to measurable behavior change in an identified audience or stakeholder group in the problem area. Probability that project results/outcomes will reach beyond the project scale and duration, producing sustained education/extension initiatives. Conference proposals should state how the meeting will affect adoption of methyl bromide alternatives.

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

During the peer evaluation process, we take extreme care to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, we determine the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution by reference to the current Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 1801 Robert Fulton Drive, Suite 340, Reston, VA, 20191. Phone: (888) 349-7715. Web site: <http://www.hepinc.com>.

Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, are 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, to the extent permitted by law; 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, with updates on an as needed basis. This requirement is 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 NIFA program.

We will provide you copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the preaward process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its 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 NIFA awarding official 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 NIFA awarding official 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. 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 NIFA under this RFA may be used only for the purpose for which they are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, regulations, terms and conditions of the award, applicable federal cost principles, USDA assistance regulations (parts 3015 and 3019 of 7 CFR), and NIFA General Awards Administration Provisions at 7 CFR part 3430, subparts A through E.

### **B. Award Notice**

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum:

- (1) Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the director has issued an award 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 award number assigned by NIFA;
- (5) Project period, specifying the amount of time NIFA intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of financial assistance approved for the award;
- (7) Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
- (8) Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
- (9) Applicable award terms and conditions (see [www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html) to view NIFA award terms and conditions);

(10) Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

(11) Other information or provisions deemed necessary by NIFA to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

### **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. These include, but are not limited to:

2 CFR Part 220—Cost Principles for Educational Institutions (OMB Circular A-21).

2 CFR Part 225—Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments (OMB Circular A-87).

2 CFR Part 230—Cost Principles for Non-profit Organizations (OMB Circular A-122).

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 3015—USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, implementing OMB directives (i.e., OMB Circular Nos. A-21, A-87, and A-122, now codified at 2 CFR Parts 220, 225 and 230), and incorporating provisions of 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308 (formerly the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Pub. L. No. 95-224), as well as general policy requirements applicable to recipients of departmental financial assistance.

7 CFR Part 3016—USDA Implementation of Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments.

7 CFR Part 3017—USDA implementation of Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement).

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 3019—USDA implementation of OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations (2 CFR Part 215).

7 CFR Part 3021—USDA Implementation of Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants).

7 CFR Part 3022—Research Institutions Conducting USDA-Funded Extramural Research; Research Misconduct.

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

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

7 CFR 3430—Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Financial Assistance Programs--General Award Administrative Provisions.

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 to submit initial project information and annual and summary reports to NIFA's electronic, Web-based inventory system that facilitates both grantee submissions of project outcomes and public access to information on Federally-funded projects. The details of these reporting requirements are included in the award terms and conditions. Details of annual and final technical reporting requirements also are included in the award terms and conditions.

## PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

Programmatic Contacts:

**Kitty Cardwell**

**Title:** National Program Leader

**Unit(s):** Division of Climate Change;  
Institute of Bioenergy, Climate and Environment

**Location:** 3192 Waterfront Centre

[Full Address and Directions](#)

**Phone:** (202) 401-1790

**Fax:** (202) 401-4888

**Email:** [kcardwell@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:kcardwell@nifa.usda.gov)

**Rachel Melnick**

**Title:** AAAS S&T Fellow

**Unit(s):** Division of Climate Change;  
Institute of Bioenergy, Climate and Environment

**Location:** 3277 Waterfront Centre

[Full Address and Directions](#)

**Phone:** (202) 401-4980

**Fax:** (202) 401-4888

**Email:** [rmelnick@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:rmelnick@nifa.usda.gov)

Administrative/Business Contacts:

**Duane Alphas**

**Title:** Team Leader

**Unit(s):** Awards Management Division Branch 2

**Location:** 2152 Waterfront Centre

[Full Address and Directions](#)

**Phone:** (202) 401-3319

**Fax:** (202) 401-6271

**Email:** [dalphs@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:dalphs@nifa.usda.gov)

**Rochelle McCrea**

**Unit(s):** Awards Management Division Branch 2

**Location:** 2160 Waterfront Centre

[Full Address and Directions](#)

**Phone:** (202) 401-2880

**Fax:** (202) 401-6271

**Email:** [rmccrea@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:rmccrea@nifa.usda.gov)

## **PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION**

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

We will send copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments 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 award state otherwise, awardees may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of award funds.

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

a. The permissible changes by the awardee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project 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 awardee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the program contact.

b. The awardee must request, and the ADO must approve in writing, all changes in approved goals or objectives prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests be approved for changes that are outside the scope of the original approved project.

c. The awardee must request, and the ADO must approve in writing, all changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel, prior to effecting such changes.

d. The awardee must request, and the ADO must approve in writing, all 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, prior to instituting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

e. The project period may be extended without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed any applicable statutory limit or expiring appropriation limitation. The terms and conditions of award include information about no-cost extensions of the award and when ADO's prior approval is necessary.

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 an award, it becomes a part of the record of NIFA transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary 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 an award 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 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), 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**

**State of the commodity** projects are integrated projects (research and extension) that evaluate current pest management challenges and the economics of pest management in the absence of methyl bromide for those commodities phased off of methyl bromide (i.e. had a critical use exemption in 2008- 2015).

Please refer to [7 CFR 3430, Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Financial Assistance Programs--General Award Administrative Provisions](#), for applicable definitions for this NIFA grant program.