Trends In USDA Research Support for Specialty Crops

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Mission Area
USDA Research, Education and Economics

What is REE?
- CSREES
- ARS
- ERS
- NASS
Farm Bill Structural Changes

- Under Secretary is now also the Chief Scientist for all of USDA.

- Research, Education and Extension Office (REEO) established in the Office of the Under Secretary.

- National Institute of Food and Agriculture to be created and incorporate CSREES programs.
Coordinate, Collaborate
Synchronize and Synergize

Chief Scientist’s role is to provide Leadership for science across USDA.

– “Promote the collaborative use of all agricultural research, education and extension resources from the local, State, tribal, regional, national and international levels …’
REOO Division Chiefs

- Renewable Energy and Natural Resources
- Food Safety, Nutrition and Health
- Plant Health and Production
- Animal Health and Production
- Agricultural Systems and Technology
- Agricultural Economics

To assist the Under Secretary and to coordinate intramural and extramural research, education and extension activities to ensure maximum integration.
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

- Will be home to all existing CSREES statutory and budgetary authorities and programs.

- Will be home to several new programs added or expanded in the Farm Bill.

- The NRI and IFAFS authorities are combined into one program – AFRI. Will span basic to applied research as well as integrated projects that include education and/or extension.
Reasons for Interest in Specialty Crop Research, Education and Extension

- Size and Value of the Industry
- Distribution of the Industry
- Nutrition and Health Concerns
- Food Safety Concerns
- Opportunity for Rural Entrepreneurs
- Direct Marketing at Urban Interface
- Very Small to Very Large Scale
Complexity of Specialty Crop Research

- Number of Crops
- Number of Systems
- Number of Locations
- Number of Participants
- Number of Markets
Complexity of Promising Research Opportunities

- Genetics
- Crop Management
- Pest Management
- Production Systems
- Mechanization
- Food Safety
- Nutrition and Quality
- Economics
Overall Trends in USDA Research

Funding Growth

- Specialty Crops Research Initiative
- Organic Agriculture Research Initiative
- Beginning Farmer and Rancher Program
- Biomass Research and Development Initiative

$100 Million/yr plus; about 10 % of CSREES
Overall Trends in USDA Research

Type of Funding Growth

- **Competitive Up**

- **Farm Bill Report Language:**
  “The managers recognize the numerous benefits of competitive research programs and have supported the expansion of funding for these programs. The managers encourage the Department to make every effort to increase support for competitive programs while maintaining the needs of capacity and infrastructure programs when making budgetary decisions.”

  “…adopts an amendment to change programs authorized under section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act into programs that award competitive grants….”

- **Earmarks Down**
Overall Trends in USDA Research

**Length of Funding**

- **Conventional Research Grants:** 1-3 years
- **CAP Grants (Coordinated Agricultural Projects):** 3-5 years
- **New Authority: AFRI, Section 7406:** “The term of a competitive grant made under this section may not exceed ten years” (limited use, where justified, crop breeding etc.)
Coordinated Agricultural Projects (CAP) combine significant funding over time and across institutions to support discovery and applications, and promote communication leading to innovative science-based solutions to critical and emerging national priorities.
USDA Specialty Crops Research
Charting a Strategic Course

- Industry is Very Complex
- Public Sector Interests are Complex
- What is Appropriate Role for Federal, Public Sector, Support for Research, Education and Extension?
- What Work is Most Relevant?
- What Scientific Opportunities Exist?
- How Can We Be Most Productive?
Summation

- More Funding
- More Coordinated
- More Focused
- More Competitive
- More Stable
- More Input (your input)