

## Alfalfa Pollinator Research Initiative: 2016 Requests for Plans

Funding available through the **Alfalfa Pollinator Research Initiative** (APRI) provides valuable resources from USDA Agricultural Research Service for research that ensures the availability of healthy non-*Apis* pollinator populations essential for alfalfa seed production. The current primary non-*Apis* (non-honey bee) pollinators are the alfalfa leafcutting bee, *Megachile rotundata*, and the alkali bee, *Nomia melanderi*.

Research must address one or more of the topics listed, which are all relevant to alfalfa pollinators:

- I. Management: Includes assessment of current, and the development of new, methods for storing and rearing bees at bee-management facilities or on the farm, including better understanding of bee development under natural and artificial conditions.
- II. Production: Includes development of practices for cost-effective on-farm and off-farm multiplication and retention of populations for commercial use.
- III. Safety: Includes studies of the effects on alfalfa-pollinating bees of: 1) exposure to pesticides (used for crop or for bees), 2) of farming/community practices (e.g., tilling, pesticide-treated seed plantings, weed control, mosquito abatement), and of 3) bee handling and shipping.
- IV. Epidemiology and Disease Management: Includes study of bee-related pathogens, predators, parasites, and their interactions with other natural factors (e.g., nutrition, starvation, pesticides) that contribute directly or indirectly to mortality or reduced fecundity.
- V. Genetics and Demographics: As directly relevant to the above topics, includes studies of bee population genetics, gene expression, and demographics such as population presence, abundance, and distribution (historical and present).

Requests for plans (RFPs) of work for Fiscal Year 2016 will be accepted until **January 11, 2016**. Funding requests may be for work requiring up to two years for completion, but cannot exceed **\$25,000 per year** and can only be funded one year at a time. For two-year plans, please submit separate budget sheets for each year, neither exceeding \$25,000. Funding consideration, however, will only be given for Year 1 during this requesting cycle.

At this time also, a request for Year 2 of a plan already funded for Year 1 should be (re)submitted, with only the Year 2 budget.

Contingent on the number of awarded proposals, full budget requests may, or may not, be met. It is strongly encouraged that findings be reported in peer-reviewed journals. Additionally, brief project reports (1-3 pages) will be solicited and required annually and will be posted on a website, which will archive all APRI projects in a searchable database. By solicitation of the program organizer, oral reports or posters by funded researchers may be requested for presentation at the annual Western Alfalfa Seed Growers Association meeting in January.

RFPs are accepted for review only if they strictly adhere to submission procedures and format outlined below. Only RFPs received by close of business (5 pm Mountain Time) on the given deadline will be accepted for review.

RFPs will be reviewed by ARS Pollinating Insects Research Unit scientists and the six Class 1 members of the National Alfalfa and Forage Alliance. Announcements of awarded proposals for 2016 will be made by **February 5**. Funding will be provided to non-ARS PIs via Non-Assistance Cooperative Agreements (NACA) between ARS and the institution of the Lead Investigator. ARS PIs will be funded at the ARS Research Unit level. The dispensation of funds will occur as efficiently as is possible within any current restrictions on the Federal Budget or the work load of the ARS Agreements Specialists.

Contact Theresa Pitts-Singer for more information.

Phone: 435-797-0581; Email: [Theresa.Pitts-Singer@ars.usda.gov](mailto:Theresa.Pitts-Singer@ars.usda.gov)

See writing/submission instructions for RFP on the next page.

## **Request for Plan (RFP) of Work Instructions**

Excluding title page, budget, and budget justification, new RFPs shall not exceed 3 pages that includes all single-spaced text, figures, and tables. Year 2 of an already awarded two-year plan can be a resubmission of the original plan, making sure the work in Year 2 is clearly distinguished from Year 1 and contains a meaningful and separate budget.

### **Title Page (1 Page)**

**Project Title:**

**Year(s) of Study:**

**Lead Investigator / Affiliation:**

**Collaborating Investigator(s) / Affiliation(s):**

**Hyperlink to research website and/or curriculum vitae:**

### **Project Information (3 Page Maximum)**

**Introduction and Justification (≤ 300 words):** Describe the need for research in the context of alfalfa seed production. Explain how results will be tangible and relevant for alfalfa seed growers and bee managers.

**Objective(s):** Clearly state and describe objective(s).

**Methods:** Describe laboratory or field set ups, replication, analyses, etc. that provide a general understanding of how research will be performed.

**Time Line:** Outline important phases as a function of time for the entire project period (≤ 2 years); include start and end dates of study period.

**Expected Outcomes and Outreach (≤ 150 words):** Already expected outcomes and outreach are peer-reviewed publications, non-peer reviewed university-based publications, and the final report for the APRI website. In this section, also describe any technology transfer or impactful information that will be gained from your research, and how that information may be disseminated to customers beyond reporting for Western Alfalfa Seed Grower Association Winter Meeting Proceedings.

### **Budget & Justification**

Use the form provided; IT IS NEW, and is a USDA grants budget form. Include a second budget period, if you have a two-year plan. 20% of the ARS funds (Fed) must be matched by non-ARS funds (non-Fed), and no indirect costs can be paid by ARS. Work with your sponsored programs or agreements office to figure out amounts. For other information, contact Theresa Pitts-Singer (435-797-0581; [Theresa.Pitts-Singer@ars.usda.gov](mailto:Theresa.Pitts-Singer@ars.usda.gov)) or (Michelle Covert 435-797-2524; [Michelle.Covert@ars.usda.gov](mailto:Michelle.Covert@ars.usda.gov)).

You will also have to provide a Budget Justification. An example is provided.

### **How to Submit**

By the given deadline, send RFPs via email to [Theresa.Pitts-Singer@ars.usda.gov](mailto:Theresa.Pitts-Singer@ars.usda.gov). Project title page and information (up to 4 pages) should be submitted as a single PDF, and the budget form and justification should accompany the proposal.