

Proposals must be postmarked no later than May 22 (sixty days past posting), 2004.

Section I Funding Opportunity Description

Agency Name: US EPA Region 10, Office of Ecosystems and Communities

Mailing Address: 24106 N. Bunn Road, Prosser, WA 99350

Funding Opportunity Title: Request for Proposals for Strategic Agricultural Initiative Funding

CFDA Numbers: 66.716

CFDA Titles: Surveys, Studies, Investigations, Demonstrations, and Special Purpose Projects within the Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances.

Due Date for Proposals: Proposals must be postmarked no later than May 22, 2004.

Purpose

EPA Region 10 seeks to establish a Cooperative Agreement for implementing programs to reduce pesticide risk in agricultural production. Assistance agreement recipients must be capable of administering a competitive grants program, including evaluation and outreach, across state boundaries, crop commodities, and natural resource concerns. We seek partnerships that bring together key stakeholders involved in minor crop production in order to reduce pesticide risk to the food supply, workers, and the environment. Experience in quantifying pesticide risk-reduction strategies and a track record of successful, on-farm pesticide reduction research and demonstration programs is sought.

Background

In response to the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) of 1996, EPA created the Strategic Agricultural Initiative (SAI) to support implementation and transition efforts by growers. FQPA mandated the re-registration of older pesticides and reassessment of pesticide tolerances in food, setting guidelines to protect vulnerable consumer groups such as children. The greatest impacts of FQPA are likely to be on minor-use crops, such as the fruits and vegetables that serve as mainstays in the diets of children. These impacts are driving forces in the adoption of new pest management strategies by minor-use growers. Cooperative efforts with growers groups, processors, university personnel, and others, can reduce the pesticide risks from minor crop production by identifying and promoting alternative pest management methods.

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Section II Award Information

Duration & Amount: One cooperative agreement will be issued for a limit of \$1.5 million in funding over a maximum five-year project period. Applicants should consider an annual budget of \$200,000 when developing their proposals. Actual funding will depend on future appropriations.

In Region 10, SAI funding supports projects in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Funds may be used for subgrants to eligible entities (see below) in the Region 10 states and for costs incurred in the administration and evaluation of the grant program. Costs incurred prior to the grant award will not be reimbursed.

Funding Restrictions and Requirements No match is required, however leveraging of funds, in-kind

contributions, and other forms of leveraging strengthen proposals.

Incomplete proposals or proposals that do not follow the required format are NOT eligible and will be returned to the applicant without being reviewed.

Fax submissions are NOT eligible.

Section III Eligibility Information

This cooperative agreement opportunity is open to all entities, including non-profit and for-profit organizations, commodity groups/associations, extension and university programs, state and federal government agencies, and tribes. Proposals for renewal or supplement of existing projects are eligible to compete.

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Section IV Application and Submission Information

Important Dates:

March 22, 2004 - Solicitation Posted on WEB

May 22, 2004 - Proposals must be postmarked no later than May 22, 2004.

Late Spring, 2004 - Successful Applicant notified

September 30, 2004 - Money will be made available to Awardee for project work to begin on or after September 30, 2004.

Format. Follow format provided in attached file here. (R10 SAI format.wpd and R10 SAI format.doc)

Submitting Your Proposal Package

Applicants must submit **one signed hard copy** and one electronic version of their proposal via email or on a 3.5" disk, "IBM" compatible, readable in Microsoft Word or Word Perfect WP6/7/8 for Windows. Proposals must be postmarked no later than May 22, 2004.

Address Proposals to:

US EPA, Region 10
Strategic Ag Initiative
24106 N. Bunn Road
Prosser, WA 99350

Applicants will be notified to confirm the receipt of proposals.

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Section V Application Review Information

An EPA review team will evaluate all proposals submitted and rank them according to the stated objectives and required skills listed below. Each bullet below will be ranked on a scale of 1 (does not meet the requirement) to 10 (fully meets the requirement). A total of 100 points is possible.

Selection Criteria

Applicants must have the capability to meet the following objectives. A brief narrative should be attached addressing each required skill (see proposal format). This will allow EPA Region 10 to assess each potential recipient's unique qualifications for the cooperative agreement.

1. Knowledge of Integrated Pest Management: demonstrate thorough knowledge of Integrated Pest Management and application of IPM strategies at commercial field scale.
2. Influencing behavioral change: develop strategies to encourage producers to adopt and

- implement Integrated Pest Management/pesticide reduced-risk techniques
3. Environmental measures: develop and evaluate program plans with quantifiable environmental impacts and measurable reductions in pesticide risk;
 4. Adaptive management : project management and oversight to keep projects on track and assist with decisions to adjust the course when obstacles arise, including on-site visits as appropriate.
 5. Geographic coverage: The recipient must be able to administer the program across EPA Region 10, which includes the states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.
 6. Commodity and stakeholder diversity: The recipient must be able to objectively evaluate and prioritize FQPA needs for minor crops grown in the Pacific Northwest and to allow for open eligibility for grant recipients, including grower organizations, commodities, universities, nonprofits, for-profits, & tribes.
 7. Prior experience in building and promoting public-private partnerships to bring together diverse key stakeholders involved in agricultural production.
 8. Efficiency: Maximize the use of available resources for measurable environmental improvements or pesticide risk reduction.
 9. Distribution and publicity for projects: Via press releases, workshops, and other appropriate means, publicize the grants program and results throughout the Region 10 states.
 10. Administrative assistance: The recipient must have sufficient resources and experience to distribute and monitor of funds in accordance with Federal guidelines, collect submitted proposals, form a review committee, etc.

Reporting The selected grant recipient must complete at least one annual report each year, and a comprehensive final report at the end of the cooperative agreement. Progress reports and financial status reports will be required quarterly.

Confidentiality Applicants must clearly mark information they consider confidential and EPA will make confidentiality decisions in accordance with agency regulations at 40 CFR, Part 2, Subpart B.

Disputes Should the selection be disputed, the Region will adhere to the dispute resolution process in accordance with 40 CFR 30.63 and Part 31, subpart F.

Disclaimer EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals or applications and make no awards.

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Section VI Award Administration Information

If your Proposal is Selected for Funding, you will be invited to complete the full EPA assistance agreement application package. Most of the information required in the full package will have already been submitted with the proposal. There are, however, a number of additional forms and pieces of information that EPA requires before releasing the funds. This could include a Quality Assurance/Quality Control plan (QAQC) if data will be collected for the project, disclaimers regarding lobbying activities, statements of organizational status and so forth. Specific financial and other reporting requirements will be identified in the EPA award agreement.

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Section VII Agency Contact(s)

If you have questions or need additional information regarding this Strategic Agricultural Initiative Request for Proposals, please contact Sandy Halstead, EPA R10, (509)786-9225 or halstead.sandra@epa.gov

Section VIII Other Information

Region 10 Strategic Ag Initiative Web Page

List of on-farm research and demonstration projects previously funded in 2001 and 2002
(link to Region 10 SAI webpage - to be created)