

**Request for Proposals for FY2007
Food Quality Protection Act/Strategic Agricultural Initiative Program**

OVERVIEW:

Federal Agency Name: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2, Division of Enforcement and Compliance Assistance, Pesticides and Toxics Substance Branch

Funding Opportunity Title: Food Quality Protection Act/Strategic Agricultural Initiative Program Request for Proposals (RFP)

Announcement Type: Initial Announcement

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R2-DECA-PTSB-06-01

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA): [Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance \(CFDA\) Number: 66.716](#)

Action Date(s):

Proposal Due Date	August 23, 2006, 5:00 pm EST
Request for Complete Application	on or about September 18, 2006
Expected grant award notification	December 1, 2006

Executive Summary

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Region 2, Division of Enforcement and Compliance Assistance (DECA), Pesticides and Toxic Substance Branch (PTSB) is soliciting proposals from eligible organizations that will reduce the exposure to toxic pesticides through the adoption of farm pest management practices that transition away from the use of high-risk pesticides. This funding opportunity supports the Strategic Agricultural Initiative (SAI). The proposed projects must focus on achieving the following strategic targets:

- 1) Decreasing the occurrences of residues of carcinogenic and cholinesterase-inhibiting neurotoxic pesticides on food eaten by children, and/or
- 2) Reducing the mortality to non-targeted terrestrial and aquatic wildlife caused by pesticides

The in-field adoption by farmers of already identified potential low-risk integrated crop or pest management tools and strategies is a priority. The proposed project will work towards achieving the adoption of reduced-risk alternatives and /or ecologically-based Integrated Pest Management (IPM) or

biologically integrated farming approaches that are economical. The project should engage scientists, farmers, industry, and local, state and federal partners.

For this competition, the Program anticipates funding one proposal for up to \$100,000. The performance period of the proposed project is not to exceed 2 years.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) 66.716 states that the intended use of these funds is to support Surveys, Studies, Investigations, Training, Demonstrations, Educational Outreach and Special Purpose assistance relating to the protection of public health and the environment from potential risk from toxic chemicals. The statutory authority for this grant program is under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Section 20, and the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), Section 10, as amended by Public Law 106-74. These statutory authorities can be found here:

[FIFRA Section 20](#)

[TSCA Section 10](#)

[Public Law 106-74 106th Congress](#)

The Strategic Agricultural Initiative (SAI) is EPA's outreach program to demonstrate and facilitate the adoption of farm pest management practices that will enable growers to transition away from the use of high-risk pesticides. The SAI encourages the development of pest management practices and products that are safe, effective and support the implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA). The in-field adoption by farmers of already identified potential low-risk integrated crop or pest management tools and strategies is a priority. The program supports innovative efforts that enable growers to decrease reliance on agricultural chemicals while maintaining economical outcomes, by developing, demonstrating and/or applying reduced-risk alternatives and ecologically-based integrated approaches to pest management.

Proposed projects must focus on achieving the following strategic targets found in the 2003 - 2008 EPA Strategic Plan under Goal 4 (Healthy Communities and Ecosystems), Sub-objective 4.1.1 (Reduce Exposure to Toxic Pesticides):

- 1) Decreasing the occurrences of residues of carcinogenic and cholinesterase-inhibiting neurotoxic pesticides on food eaten by children, and/or
- 2) Reducing the mortality to non-targeted terrestrial and aquatic wildlife caused by pesticides

In order to achieve the objectives above, the project will entail demonstration, extension (dispensing research and providing technical assistance to growers by Cooperative Extension Specialists.), outreach and/or education on integrated or sustainable agricultural production practices in partnership with producers, commodity groups and other stakeholders by making the best use of expert field consultants, USDA research, EPA's safer substitutes, and university supported technical support on alternatives and pest management practices.

Expected Outcomes and Outputs:

Outcomes: Through this grant program, EPA expects proposed projects to: 1) increase the number of growers using reduced risk/IPM tools and techniques; 2) measure quantitative and qualitative reduction in the use of higher risk pesticides or pesticides in general; 3) measure the change in level of pest management based on the SAI Transition Index; and 4) support partnerships between crop producers, EPA, other federal/state/local agencies, and other interested stakeholders to implement reduced risk/IPM programs.

Outputs: The anticipated outputs of proposed projects include: 1) educational and outreach materials for growers; 2) training; and, 3) reports on project progress and final results.

II. Award Information

For this competition, the Program anticipates awarding one proposal for up to \$100,000 to an eligible applicant. The program plans to award a grant agreement with a project period of no more than 2 years. Funding and project periods can extend for no more than two years. The suggested start date for the project is January 1, 2007. **Please note, based on the availability of funds and the quality of applications, EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals/applications and make no award under this Request for Proposals (RFP).** The EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement consistent with Agency policy, if additional funding becomes available. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than 4 months from the date of original selection decisions.

EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals/applications by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal/application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal/application, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and that maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Assistance under this program is generally available to any State, U.S. territories or possession, federally recognized Indian tribal governments, and Native American Organizations, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public or private non-profit institutions and individuals. Not-for-profit organizations must be a certified 501(c)(3) organization (based on the Federal Tax Code Section 501) to be eligible.

B. Cost Sharing Or Matching

There are no match or cost-sharing requirements. However, both the degree to which the project budget effectively uses EPA funds and leverages matching funds will be considered as evaluation criteria.

Matching funds can include cash or in-kind contributions (including labor) provided by your organization and/or other entities. Other Federal money cannot be used as the match or cost share unless authorized by the statute governing the award of the other Federal funds. Any dollars counted towards a formal match must be for costs that U.S. EPA can fund. Allowable costs for nonprofit organizations are defined in OMB circular A-122; allowable costs for public entities are defined in OMB circular A-87. If an applicant identifies matching funds from sources other than itself, they should indicate if such funds are committed at the time of application, or when they will be available.

C. Other Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, applicants and proposed projects will need to meet all of the following threshold criteria. Threshold criteria will be applied on a pass/fail basis. Failure to meet any of them will render an application ineligible; ineligible applications will not be evaluated or considered.

Threshold Criterion 1: Geographic Location of Proposed Project Work

Proposed projects must take place in one or more Region 2 States (New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands). Proposed projects that do not take place within New York, New Jersey, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and/or the Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands are not eligible.

Threshold Criterion 2: Applicant Eligibility

Assistance under this program is available to States, U.S. territories or possession, federally recognized Indian tribal governments, and Native American Organizations, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public or private non-profit institutions (as described in Section 501(c)(3)) and individuals.

Threshold Criterion 3: Complete Proposals are Submitted on Time and without electronic viruses

Proposals are due on **August 23, 2006 by 5:00 pm EST**. Proposal submissions must strictly adhere to this deadline and electronic submittals must be free of electronic viruses, Trojan horses or other harmful programs. For additional information, please refer to Section IV, Application & Submission Information.

Threshold Criterion 4: Environmental Focus

Proposed projects must focus on achieving either one or both of the strategic targets listed in Section I above. Proposed projects must address critical pest management issues and demonstrate the importance and relevancy of the of the project to implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act. Projects must measure and document the effects of using the reduce-risk/IPM strategies on the environment, and human health. This funding is intended to support demonstration projects, and cannot be used for basic research. However, proposed projects may include a component for applied on-farm research.

Threshold Criterion 5: Allowable Activities

All proposed project activities and costs must be eligible under either of the following EPA grant authorities:

Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Section 20, as amended by Public Law 106-74, and, Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), Section 10, as amended by Public Law 106-74.

Also, applicants should refer to the applicable cost principles for guidance on allowability, allocability and reasonableness of costs (see Section IV E, Funding Restrictions)

Proposals that do not meet these threshold criteria will be rejected without further evaluation. In addition, proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the proposal and/or parts of the proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. **Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.**

IV. APPLICATION & SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Address to Request Application Package

Please follow the instructions provided in the section below titled, “Content and Form of Proposal Submission.” Only one applicant whose proposal is selected will be invited to submit a full application for funding. If you are invited to submit a full application, the application kit is available at <http://www.epa.gov/region02/grants/kit.htm>, or by contacting the EPA Contact listed in Section VII of this announcement. The application package will include completed forms of the application kit. The application kit includes information and contacts for this process. Completed applications should be submitted to Mr. Roch Baamonde, Chief, Grants and Contracts Management Branch. The applicant who is invited to submit a full application will be provided further details at the time of invitation.

All recipients must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number on their formal SF-424 applications. A DUNS number can be obtained by calling 1-866-705-5711. A DUNS number is not required until a full application is submitted.

Applicants applying through Grants.gov will find the entire application package by following the instructions listed in Section IV. H. of this announcement.

B. Content and Form of Proposal Submission

Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. Pages must be numbered in order starting with the cover page and continuing through the appendices. If you are applying via the hard copy method, one original hard paper copy and one electronic copy (CD, 3.5”disk, or e-mail attachment) are required. If you are applying via the Grants.gov method, no hard copy or electronic copy (CD, disk, or email attachment) is required. (see Section IV F “Other Submission Requirements” of this announcement for more information about applying via Grants.gov)

In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application/ proposal as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications/proposals or portions of applications/proposals they

claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure.

Proposals will be reviewed and ranked using the evaluation criteria noted below in Section V, Proposal Review Information. Submission of the proposal is the most significant phase in the competitive process and proposals must include information that addresses and corresponds to the criteria/ranking factors set forth in Section V of this announcement. In evaluating applicants for programmatic capability purposes, EPA will consider information provided by the applicant in their proposal, as well as information from other sources, including agency files. For proposed work plans that would collect environmental data, a quality assurance project plan is not required at the time of proposal submittal but will be required if and when you are invited to submit a complete application. Specific instructions for preparing the full application will be provided at that time.

The Narrative Proposal, as described below, must be typewritten. The electronic copy (submitted either with hard copy submission or via Grants.gov submission) should be readable in PDF, MS Word or Word Perfect WP6/7/8 for Windows and consolidated into a single file.

Pages should be numbered in order starting with the cover page and continuing through the appendices.

All proposal packages must contain the following with the corresponding page numbers:

1. Standard Form (SF- 424) – Application For Federal Assistance (no page number):

Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424.

2. Standard Form (SF-424A) – Budget Information (no page number):

* If you are submitting a hard copy proposal, blank SF-424 and SF-424A forms can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/region02/grants/kit.htm>

**If you are submitting via grants.gov, the forms will be included in the electronic application package.

3. Narrative Proposal -prepared as described below

a. Cover Page(Page 1)

The cover page should list the following information with your letterhead:

- Project Title:
- Project Coordinator:
- Organization:
- Address:
- Telephone:
- E-mail address:
- Fax:

- Project Duration (including Starting Date and Ending Date):

• TOTAL BUDGET REQUEST:	REQUEST	MATCHING FUNDS	
		(Not Required)	
		Non-Federal	Federal
First Year Funding:	_____	_____	_____
Second Year Funding:	_____	_____	_____
Total Funding	_____	_____	_____
Request:	_____	_____	_____

b. Executive Summary (page 2)

The Executive Summary shall be a stand-alone document, not to exceed one page, containing the specifics of what is proposed and what you expect to accomplish regarding measuring or movement toward achieving project goals. This summary must identify the measurable environmental results you expect including potential human health and ecological benefits.

c. Table of Contents (page 3)

A one page table listing the different parts of your proposal and the page number on which each part begins.

d. Proposal Narrative (pages 4 - 14 or less)

(Parts I through V listed below are not to exceed 10 pages) **Pages in excess of 10 will not be evaluated.**

Part I. Project Title

Part II. Objectives: A numbered list (1, 2, etc.) of concisely written project objectives - in most cases, each objective can be stated in a single sentence.

Part III. Justification: For each objective listed in Part II above, discuss the potential or expected outcome in terms of environmental, human health, pesticide risk and/or use reduction or pollution prevention. If appropriate, the target pest(s) and crop(s) must be explicitly stated. This section must be numbered with a justification corresponding to each objective. Clearly describe how the project goals, tasks, and expected outcomes fit with the statutory authority associated therewith. For the FQPA/Strategic Agricultural Initiative program, the statutory authority is the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Section 20, and the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), Section 10, as amended by Public Law 106-74, and can be found here:

- [FIFRA Section 20](#)
- [TSCA Section 10](#)
- [Public Law 106-74 106th Congress](#)

Part IV. Approach and Methods: Describe in detail how the program will be carried out. Describe how the system or approach will support the program goals.

Part V. Performance Measures and Expected Outcomes: A plan must be submitted for tracking and measuring the progress toward achieving the expected environmental outputs/outcomes identified in Section I of this announcement. Please state how you will evaluate the success of the program in terms of measurable environmental results. How and with what measures will humans or ecosystems be better protected as a result of the program. The project must have two of either direct or surrogate measures. Examples of performance measures may be found in the SAI Toolbox, located at <http://www.aftresearch.org/sai/> (SAI Grant Applicants, Performance Measures.) The workplan must also include the number of acres likely to be impacted by the project, percent reduction or pound per acre reduction expected in the use of highly toxic active ingredients and /or pesticide products, and the current level of pest management and the level that is expected to be achieved at the end of the project based on the SAI Transition Index, which is located at http://www.aftresearch.org/sai/public/docviewer.php?doc=./pdf/Transition_Matrix.pdf

e. Proposal Appendices

Continue page numbering. The appendices listed below must be included in the grant proposal. The appendices may be single spaced. Additional appendices are not permitted.

- A. **Timetable:** A timetable that includes what will be accomplished under each of the objectives during the project and when completion of each objective is anticipated.
- B. **Major Participants:** This appendix should list all farmers/ranchers, farm/ranch organizations, researchers, educators, and conservationists and others having a major role in the proposal. Provide name, organizational affiliation or occupation (such as farmer) and a description of the role each will play in the project. A brief resume (not to exceed two pages) should be submitted for each major researcher or other educator.
- C. **Applicant's Capabilities and Environmental Results Past Performance:** Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements), and describe how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outputs and outcomes) under those agreements. If you were not making progress, please indicate whether, and how, you documented why not. In evaluating applicants under this factor in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current and prior Federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available environmental results past performance information,

please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for this factor under Section V. In addition, also include the following: a) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the project, and b) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project.

D. Project Budget: Provide a detailed itemized budget matrix similar to the blank matrix below. Identify how the requested funds are to be used, linking the cost of each objective with the budget. Also, identify how other funding will be used in this project. Please include an indirect cost rate if applicable. If your proposal is selected for funding, you will be requested to submit a copy of your current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement covering the grant proposed period.

Project Budget (*This page will be “Appendix D”, the last full page*)

Project Period: From:

TO:

Budget Category	Federal Funding Requested from EPA	Non-Federal Funding (if applicable, indicate source and amount)	Total Funding
Personnel			
Fringe Benefits			
Travel			
Equipment			
Supplies			
Contractual			
Indirect Cost			
Other (detail)			
Total			

C. Submission Dates and Times

The following is the schedule of deadlines for this grant opportunity:

Receipt of Proposal	August 23, 2006, 5:00 pm EST
Request for Complete Application	on or about September 18, 2006
Expected grant award notification	December 1, 2006

Proposals must be postmarked or submitted via Grants.gov no later than the date and time indicated above. If a proposal is submitted late, it will be rejected without further evaluation.

D. Pre-proposal Assistance and Communications

In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications/proposals. However, EPA will respond to questions in writing from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications may be subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

F. Funding Restrictions

Allowable costs for nonprofit organizations are defined in OMB circular A-122; allowable costs for public entities are defined in OMB Circular A-87; allowable costs for educational institutions are defined in OMB Circular A-21. Any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance must be awarded under the competitive procurement provisions of 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR Part 31, as applicable.

Due to restrictions imposed in EPA's Appropriations Act, recipients may not use EPA grant funds to pay consultant salaries that exceed the "daily equivalent of the rate paid" Federal employees at Level IV of the Federal executive schedule ("the consultant fee cap".) The consultant fee cap is implemented at 40 CFR §30.27(b) for grants to non-profit organizations and universities, and grants to governmental bodies are covered by 40 CFR §31.36(j). These regulations provide additional information regarding the scope of the consultant fee cap, and the costs subject to the cap. The fact that an applicant identifies a consultant in its competitive grant proposal does not exempt the grantee from complying with the consultant fee cap.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Awards involving the collection of environmental data will be subject to the requirements of a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and will require coordination with the EPA Region 2 offices. QAPP's can follow, as per the applicant's choice, either EPA Region 2 guidance or Headquarters guidance, EPA Requirements for Quality Assurance Project Plans EPA QA/R-5. A copy of the Region 2 Quality Assurance Project Plan guidance may be found on the Region 2 web site at: http://www.epa.gov/region02/qa/air_h20_qapp04.pdf

Data Access and Information Release: The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-110 has been revised to provide public access to research data through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) under some circumstances. Data that are (1) first produced in a project that is supported in whole or in part with Federal funds and (2) cited publicly and officially by a Federal agency in support of an action that has the force and effect of law (i.e., a regulation) may be accessed through FOIA. If such data are requested by the public, the EPA must ask for it, and the grantee must submit it, in accordance with A-110 and EPA regulations at 40 C.F.R. 30.36.

H. Submission Method

Please note that you may choose to apply *one of two ways*. If you wish to apply with a hard copy submission, please follow the instructions under "Hard Copy Submission" below. If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, please follow the instructions under "Electronic Submission" below. Please only use one form of submission. Proposals must be typewritten, in 12 point or larger print using an 8.5 x 11 inch paper with minimum 1-inch horizontal and vertical margins.

1. Grants. Gov Electronic Submission

If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, the electronic submission of your proposal package must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on "Get Started," and then click on "For AORs" (Authorized Organization Representative) on the left side of the page. *Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete.* If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an AOR and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To begin the application process for this grant program, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the "Apply for Grants" tab at the top of the page. Then click on "Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Application Instructions" to download the PureEdge viewer and obtain the application package and instructions for applying under this announcement using [grants.gov](https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html) (https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html). To download the PureEdge viewer click on the "PureEdge Viewer" link. Once you have downloaded the viewer, you may retrieve the application package and instructions by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-R2-DECA-PTSB-06-01, or the CFDA number 66.716 that applies to the announcement, in the appropriate field. You may also be

able to access the application package by clicking on the button “How to Apply” at the top right side of the synopsis page for this announcement on <http://www.grants.gov> (to find the synopsis pages to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Find Grant Opportunities” button on the top of the page and then go to EPA opportunities.)

Application Submission Deadline: Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete application electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) no later than July 27, 2006.

Proposal/Application Materials

The following forms and documents are required to be submitted under this announcement:

- I. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- II. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
- III. Proposal Narrative-prepared as described in Section IV.B of the announcement.

I. Standard Form (SF- 424), Application for Federal Assistance

Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424.

Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.

II. Standard Form (SF- 424A) – Budget Information:

Complete the form. There are no attachments.

The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A. If indirect costs are included, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22.

III. Proposal Narrative

The document, prepared as described in Section IV.B, should be readable in PDF, MS Word or Word Perfect WP6/7/8 for Windows and consolidated into a single file.

Application Preparation and Submission Instructions

Documents I through III above should appear in the “Mandatory Documents” box on the Grants.gov Grant Application Package page.

For documents I and II, click on the appropriate form and then click “Open Form” below the box. The fields that must be completed will be highlighted in yellow. Optional fields and completed fields will be displayed in white. If you enter an invalid response or incomplete information in a field, you will receive an error message. When you have finished filling out each form, click “Save.” When you return to the

electronic Grant Application Package page, click on the form you just completed, and then click on the box that says, “Move Form to Submission List.” This action will move the document over to the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

For document III, you will need to attach electronic files. Prepare your narrative proposal as described above in Section IV.B of the announcement and save the document to your computer as an MS Word, PDF or WordPerfect file. When you are ready to attach your proposal to the application package, click on “Project Narrative Attachment Form,” and open the form. Click “Add Mandatory Project Narrative File,” and then attach your proposal (previously saved to your computer) using the browse window that appears. You may then click “View Mandatory Project Narrative File” to view it. Enter a brief descriptive title of your project in the space beside “Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename;” the filename should be no more than 40 characters long. If there other attachments that you would like to submit to accompany your proposal, you may click “Add Optional Project Narrative File” and proceed as before. When you have finished attaching the necessary documents, click “Close Form.” When you return to the “Grant Application Package” page, select the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” and click “Move Form to Submission List.” The form should now appear in the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

Once you have finished filling out all of the forms/attachments and they appear in one of the “Completed Documents for Submission” boxes, click the “Save” button that appears at the top of the Web page. It is suggested that you save the document a second time, using a different name, since this will make it easier to submit an amended package later if necessary. Please use the following format when saving your file: “Applicant Name – FY06 – Assoc Prog Supp – 1st Submission” or “Applicant Name – FY 06 Assoc Prog Supp – Back-up Submission.” If it becomes necessary to submit an amended package at a later date, then the name of the 2nd submission should be changed to “Applicant Name – FY06 Assoc Prog Supp – 2nd Submission.”

Once your application package has been completed and saved, send it to your AOR for submission to U.S. EPA through Grants.gov. Please advise your AOR to close all other software programs before attempting to submit the application package through Grants.gov.

In the “Application Filing Name” box, your AOR should enter your organization’s name (abbreviate where possible), the fiscal year (e.g., FY06), and the grant category (e.g., Assoc Prog Supp). The filing name should not exceed 40 characters. From the “Grant Application Package” page, your AOR may submit the application package by clicking the “Submit” button that appears at the top of the page. The AOR will then be asked to verify the agency and funding opportunity number for which the application package is being submitted. If problems are encountered during the submission process, the AOR should reboot his/her computer before trying to submit the application package again. [It may be necessary to turn off the computer (not just restart it) before attempting to submit the package again.] If the AOR continues to experience submission problems, he/she may contact Grants.gov for assistance by phone at 1-800-518-4726 or email at support@grants.gov .

Application packages submitted thru grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically.

If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (*not from* support@grant.gov) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Audrey Moore. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

2. Hard Copy Submission

Applicants must submit a hard copy of their proposal package, prepared as described above in IV.B (Application & Submission Information – Content and Form of Proposal Submission), along with an electronic version. The electronic copy must be emailed as an attachment to moore.audrey@epa.gov or submitted on a CD-ROM or a 3.5” disk, IBM compatible and readable in PDF, MS Word or Word Perfect WP6/7/8 for Windows to the address indicated below. The electronic copy must be consolidated into a single file.

CD-ROM’s or disks will be checked for computer viruses. Proposals that are submitted with viruses will be disqualified. All hard copy proposals must be sent or delivered to:

By Mail: Audrey Moore
Regional Ag Policy Specialist
US EPA Region 2
2890 Woodbridge Ave., MS-500
Edison, NJ, 08837-3679
By Email: moore.audrey@epa.gov

V. Proposal Review Information

A. Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated using the criteria below. Proposals may receive up to 100 points.

- 1) Qualifications, experience and past performance (5 points). Projects will be scored based on the following factors: a) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the project, and b) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project.
- 2) Environmental Results Past Performance (5 points). Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they adequately documented and/or reported on their progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under Federal agency assistance agreements performed within the last three years, and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not. Note: In evaluating applicants under this factor, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance reporting history will receive a neutral score for this factor.
- 3) Project description and justification (total of 35 points). Reviewers will focus on the following factors:

- a) Whether the proposed activities are consistent with the allowable activities authorized under the statutes. (5 points)
- b) Consistency of applicant's proposed project with the risk reduction goals of the FQPA/Strategic Agricultural Initiative. The project demonstrates and facilitates the adoption of farm management decisions and practices that provide growers with "a reasonable transition" away from the highest risk pesticides. The project implements reduced use or reduced risk control techniques and products, or which demonstrates the potential for implementation of project results. (5 Points)
- c) Likelihood that the project can be replicated in other areas by other organizations to their benefit (5 points).
- d) The degree to which the proposed project addresses a significant geographically-specific or widespread environmental concern (5 points).
- e) The degree to which the proposed project addresses the sociological or economic forces that support adoption, or those impediments that limit adoption, of environmentally sensitive production systems (5 points).
- f) The degree to which the proposed project demonstrates potential for long-term benefits (5 points).
- g) Addresses multiple-components of the agro-ecosystem such as soil, water, air, plant, animal, and human resources (5 points).
- 4) Project strategy (10 points). The proposal includes a well-conceived strategy to achieve the project goals and objectives and a reasonable schedule for the execution of the tasks associated with each goal. The applicant should identify the method that will be used to measure and document the project's results quantitatively and/or qualitatively.
- 5) Measurement of Environmental Results. (Total of 20 points). Reviewers will focus on the following components:
- a) Progress Measures (10 points). The proposal contains clear measures of success for each major task or product, and provides a description of the format in which these measurements will be reported. The proposal also, provides a provision for a quantitative and/or qualitative evaluation of the project's success at achieving the stated goals.
- b) Environmental and Performance Measures (10 points). These measures can be either "direct" or "surrogate" measures. Direct measures identify actual environmental changes occurring with the adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices. In contrast, surrogate measures identify changes in strategies or behavior that should lead to environmental changes. The project should address two or more, but is not limited to, the following measures:

- 1) Changes in behavior of growers toward the use of lower-risk practices.
- 2) Reductions in number of detections of fruits and/or vegetables with tolerance violations, particularly organophosphates.
- 3) Comparison of the levels of residues on fruit and/or vegetables from conventional vs. reduced-risk pesticide practices.
- 4) Acres under management that include pesticide risk reduction practices. Acres treated with biopesticides or reduced risk pesticides.
- 5) Reduction of mortality to non-target aquatic and terrestrial organisms caused by pesticides.
- 6) Populations of beneficial organisms in fields and adjacent habitat.
- 7) Current level of pest management and the level that is expected to be achieved at the end of the project based on the SAI Transition Index, which is located at http://www.aftresearch.org/sai/public/docviewer.php?doc=../pdf/Transition_Matrix.pdf
- 8) Percent reduction or pound per acre reduction expected in the use of conventional pesticides.

Other examples of performance measures may be found in the SAI Toolbox, located at <http://www.aftresearch.org/sai/> (SAI Grant Applicants, Performance Measures.) The project should have two of either direct or surrogate measures.

6) Innovation (5 points). Reviewers will be looking for progressive and forward-thinking projects that undertake innovative, or novel approaches. The project provides innovative efforts that enable growers to decrease reliance on agricultural chemicals while maintaining economical outcomes, by developing, demonstrating and/or applying reduced-risk alternatives and ecologically-based integrated approaches to pest management. Will the project assess or suggest a new means of measuring progress in reducing risk/use of pesticides in the United States?

7) Partnerships (5 points). The proposal makes effective use of partnerships, and builds upon existing efforts. The project stresses involvement of local stakeholders. Partners must provide a letter of support from an official within the organization, specifying and confirming their specific contributions to the project. Number and types of key stakeholders involved in the project should be provided. The proposal provides a voluntary match or cost share, which may include in-kind contributions, and provides information on how those contributions were calculated.

8) Outreach (5 points). Supports innovative agricultural extension such as farmer-to-farmer education or farmer-scientist interaction and technology transfer.

9) Budget (10 points). Points will be awarded based on the adequacy of the budget information provided, and whether the proposed costs are reasonable and allowable, and whether the budget demonstrates effective and judicious use of Federal funds.

B. Review and Selection Process

Received proposals will first be reviewed to determine whether the applicant has satisfied all the threshold criteria listed in Section III, Part C. Only the proposals that meet all of the threshold criteria

will then be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V, Part A.

For this competition, the Program anticipates funding one proposal. A panel comprised of EPA Region 2 staff will evaluate each proposal based upon the criteria outlined in this RFP. The decision for award will be based on the total number of points as described in the criteria outlined in the RFP, and will be made by the Decision Official, who is an EPA Region 2 Division of Enforcement and Compliance Assistance manager.

The applicant organization whose proposal is selected will be notified via telephone on or about September 18, 2006, and the applicants not selected will be notified either by e-mail or by phone.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notices

The successful applicant whose final application has been selected and approved can expect to receive an award document which constitutes an agreement between EPA and the recipient organization and sets forth the terms and conditions of the financial assistance. As the assistance agreement is a legal document, an authorized representative of your organization must indicate acceptance by signing and returning the appropriate copies to the EPA Region 2 Grants Office. Specific instructions will be provided with the award document.

B. Administration and National Policy Requirements

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at:

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1371.htm>. Copies of these procedures may also be requested from the EPA Contact listed in Section VII of this announcement.

Proposals of non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding under this competition will be subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Sections 8.b, 8.c and 9.d of [EPA Order 5700.8](#). Also, non-profit applicants that qualify for funding under this announcement may, depending on the size of the award, be required to fill out and submit to the EPA Grants Management Office, with supporting documents, the Administrative Capability Form contained in Appendix A of [EPA Order 5700.8 'EPA Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards'](#): http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf

Applicants must comply with the standard requirements, terms and conditions of EPA assistance agreements. Funded activities must be allowable under EPA statutory authority (see Section I).

C. Reporting

Progress Reports: reports describing tasks accomplished, results achieved to date including any problems encountered and how problems were overcome, and a summary of funds expended will be required on a quarterly basis, as stated in 40CFR§31.40 and 40CFR§30.51. Reports should be submitted electronically if possible.

Final Reports: will be required at the completion of the project, as stated in 40CFR§31.40 and 40CFR§30.51. The report will include any agreed-upon work-product(s) resulting from the project, and copies of materials generated in connection with project activities (e.g., workshop announcements, workshop sign in sheets, newspaper/newsletter announcements, articles or releases, press packets, pamphlets, etc.). Any additional requirements will be stated in the Special Conditions of the Award document.

Financial Status Reports (FSRs): are required on an annual basis, as stated in 40CFR§30.52 and 40CFR§31.41, as applicable. A Final FSR is required at the completion of the project.

VII. Agency Contact

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