

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Cooperative State Research,
Education, and Extension Service****Guidelines for State Plans of Work for
the Agricultural Research and
Extension Formula Funds**

AGENCY: Cooperative State Research,
Education, and Extension Service,
USDA.

ACTION: Final notice.

SUMMARY: The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is implementing the Guidelines for State Plans of Work for the Agricultural Research and Extension Formula Funds. These guidelines prescribe the procedures to be followed by the eligible institutions receiving Federal agricultural research and extension formula funds under the Hatch Act of 1887, as amended (7 U.S.C. 361a *et seq.*); sections 3(b)(1) and (c) of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, as amended (7 U.S.C. 343 (b)(1) & (c)); and sections 1444 and 1445 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended (7 U.S.C. 3221 and 3222). The recipients of these funds are commonly referred to as the 1862 land-grant institutions and 1890 land-grant institutions, including Tuskegee University. This action also establishes the research and extension protocols used to evaluate the success of multistate, multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary research and extension activities, and joint research and extension activities, in addressing critical agricultural issues identified in the submitted plans of work.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. George Cooper; Deputy Administrator, Partnerships; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Washington, D.C. 20250; at 202-720-5285 or 202-720-5369, 202-720-4924 (fax) or via electronic mail at bhewitt@reeusda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: CSREES published a notice and request for comment on the Guidelines for State Plans of Work for the Agricultural Research and Extension Formula Funds in the **Federal Register** on April 19, 1999 (64 FR 19242-19248).

Background and Purpose

The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is implementing the following Guidelines for State Plans of Work for the Agricultural Research and Extension Formula Funds in order to meet the

plan of work reporting requirements enacted in the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA), Public Law 105-185. The AREERA amendments added new and consistent plan of work requirements for agricultural research and extension formula funds provided under the Hatch Act of 1887 (7 U.S.C. 361a *et seq.*), the Smith-lever Act (7 U.S.C. 341 *et seq.*), and sections 1444 and 1445 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) (U.S.C. 3221 and 3222). The specific plan of work reporting requirements are outlined in the "Preface and Authority" section of the Guidelines.

These guidelines were developed by CSREES in consultation with the State partners at the 1862 land-grant institutions and the 1890 land-grant institutions, including Tuskegee University. Since the enactment of AREERA on June 23, 1998, the Agency has engaged in these consultations, under an exemption to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (7 U.S.C. 3124a(e)), with members of both the Federal and State partnership focusing on different aspects of the plan of work and requirements for the agricultural research and extension formula funds (i.e., stakeholder input, multistate and integrated activities), and has received input and comments from the 1862 and 1890 land-grant community to ensure that the Guidelines, while meeting the legal requirements of the legislation, address the issues and concerns of the recipients. The Proposed Guidelines were published in the **Federal Register** as a notice with a 30-day comment period on April 19, 1999, and these Final Guidelines reflect consideration by CSREES of the comments received.

The amendments to the Hatch and Smith-Lever Acts plan of work requirements made by section 202 of AREERA require the Secretary of Agriculture to develop protocols to evaluate the success of multistate, multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary research and extension activities, and joint research and extension activities, in addressing the critical agricultural issues identified in the plans of work. As part of the previous notice and request for comment, CSREES sought comment on these evaluation protocols, including four evaluation criteria. Comments received were considered in the final version of section II.C.3., "Evaluation of Multistate and Integrated Research and Extension Activities." CSREES will be using the Annual Reports of Accomplishments and Results to evaluate the success of multistate,

multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary activities, and joint research and extension activities, in addressing critical agricultural issues identified in the 5-Year Plans of Work. CSREES will be using the following evaluation criteria: (1) Did the planned program address the critical issues of strategic importance, including those identified by the stakeholders? (2) Did the planned program address the needs of under-served and under-represented populations of the State(s)? (3) Did the planned program describe the expected outcomes and impacts? and (4) Did the planned program result in improved program effectiveness and/or efficiency? This section also stipulates that these protocols be developed by CSREES in shared consultation with the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board. CSREES has developed these protocols in consultation with this Advisory Board.

The due date for submission of the 5-Year Plan of Work for the period covering October 1, 1999, through September 30, 2004, is July 15, 1999.

**Public Comments and Guideline
Changes in Response**

In the Notice of the Proposed Guidelines, CSREES invited comments on the Proposed Guidelines as well as comments on the protocols to evaluate success of the multistate, multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary research and extension activities, in addressing critical agricultural issues identified in the plans of work. Fourteen comments were received. Eleven were from deans, directors, or administrators of research and extension programs at the 1862 land-grant institutions and three were from organizations representing stakeholder groups and agricultural producers.

Positive Comments

Ten of the 14 comments focused on some of the positive aspects of the Proposed Guidelines such as flexibility, accountability, appreciation for engaging the State partner institutions in the development of the plan of work guidelines as well as the opportunity to comment on the Proposed Guidelines, meeting the intent of Congress and AREERA, focus of the plan of work process on outcomes and impacts, and efforts to integrate research and extension activities. Thirteen of the comments addressed issues requiring clarification resulting in minor revisions to the Proposed Guidelines. Some areas of concern included the evaluation of the success of multistate, multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary

research and extension activities, and joint research and extension activities, implementation of sections 105 and 204 of AREERA for multistate extension activities and integrated research and extension activities, definitions of "activities" and programs," the stakeholder input process, and the merit review and scientific peer review processes.

Seven out of 14 commenters appreciated the flexibility that both the plan of work process and the Proposed Guidelines provide as State programs have major differences due to geographic uniqueness and location specificity. Emphasizing the benefits of such flexibility, one commenter wrote: "The flexibility will result in the strengths of the State, regional, and national programs being contained in the annual reports and will manifest the strength of the Federal/State partnership in meeting the needs of consumers and producers."

Seven of the commenters expressed appreciation for either the opportunity CSREES afforded the partnership institutions to engage in the discussions about the process and approach to implementing the provisions of AREERA or the opportunity to comment on the Proposed Guidelines. Other positive comments noted that the Proposed Guidelines focused on accountability through reporting on outcomes and impacts, met the intent of Congress and AREERA, and made efforts to further integrate research and extension activities.

Evaluation Protocols and Criteria

Six commenters discussed the research and extension protocols for evaluating the success of multistate, multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary research and extension activities, in addressing the critical agricultural issues identified in the plans of work. CSREES proposed using the Annual Reports of Accomplishments and Results to evaluate the success of multistate, multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary activities, and joint research and extension activities, in addressing critical agricultural issues in the 5-Year Plans of Work. CSREES proposed using the following evaluation criteria: (1) Did the planned program address the critical issues of strategic importance, including those identified by the stakeholders? (2) Did the planned program address the needs of under-served populations of the State(s)? (3) Did the planned program prescribe the expected outcomes and impacts? and (4) Did the planned program result in improved effectiveness and /or

efficiency? Three of the evaluation commenters said that they looked forward to the public comment process on these evaluation protocols. However, they offered no comments on the process. The Proposed Guidelines that were published in the **Federal Register** on April 19, 1999, included the proposed evaluation protocols for these activities as well as the proposed evaluation criteria. Therefore, there will be no need for a future comment process as CSREES has already received comments on these proposed evaluation protocols.

The fourth commenter questioned the evaluation criteria for measuring the success of multistate, multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary research and extension activities, and joint research and extension activities, particularly evaluation criteria nos. 2 and 4. The commenter noted that no. 2 asks if the needs of the under-served populations were addressed by the planned program and that this question was not asked during the planning process (development of the 5-Year Plan of Work). The commenter suggested that this be included in the planning process.

In response, CSREES has revised the section on *targeted audiences* under "Planned Programs" to: "The *targeted audiences* identifies the set of stakeholders, customers, and/or consumers for which the program is intended. The 5-Year Plan of Work should address the institution's commitment to facilitating equality of service and ease of access to all research and extension programs and services and to meeting the needs of under-served and under-represented individuals, groups, and/or organizations."

The commenter also questioned evaluation criterion no. 4 which asks whether the planned program resulted in improved program effectiveness and/or efficiency. The commenter wanted to know how improvement in efficiency was to be measured, when the planning process focuses on effectiveness—impacts and outcomes.

CSREES has revised the section on *internal and external linkages* to clarify this issue under "Planned Programs" to: The *internal and external linkages* include activities identified as integrated, multidisciplinary, multi-institutional, and/or multistate. This component may also address any efforts made to identify and collaborate with other colleges and universities that have a unique capacity to address the identified agricultural issues within the State and the extent of current and emerging efforts (including regional

efforts) to work with those institutions. Within this planning component, discussion should be made regarding any efficiencies achieved through these external and internal linkages both in the use of resources and in the ability to solve critical agricultural issues."

The fifth commenter commended CSREES for specifically seeking comment on the development of protocols to evaluate the success in meeting the new directives concerning multistate, multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary" and integration." This commenter along with the sixth commenter on these evaluation protocols urged CSREES to include a strong stakeholder review and input process as an integral part of the review process for the 5-Year Plans of Work, for the Annual Reports of Accomplishments and Results, and for measuring the success of multistate, multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary research and extension activities and joint research and extension activities.

CSREES at this time does not plan to have stakeholders involved at the Federal level in the review of the 5-Year Plans of Work, the review of the Annual Reports of Accomplishments and Results, or the evaluation of the multistate, multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary research and extension activities, and joint research and extension activities, in addressing critical agricultural issues identified in the 5-Year Plans of Work. CSREES feels that the stakeholder input processes at the 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions in the States will be the most effective protocol for stakeholders to provide input on these reviews and evaluations. See proposed stakeholder input rule, 64 FR 18534, April 14, 1999. However, CSREES does plan to make available through the CSREES homepage all the approved 5-Year Plans of Work and Annual Reports of Accomplishments and Results so that stakeholders may be provided an opportunity to review these documents in order to participate more fully in the stakeholder input processes in the States.

The sixth commenter felt that the Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results would not be an adequate vehicle for the evaluation of multistate and integrated research and extension activities. CSREES plans to use these reports, the 5-Year Plans of Work, and the four evaluation criteria stated in these Guidelines as the evaluation protocols and has consulted with the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board in both development

and adoption of these evaluation protocols. CSREES, however, plans to continue to dialogue with the 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions on both the programmatic and administrative aspects of these activities as AREERA has placed significant emphasis on these types of activities.

Stakeholder Input Process

Two commenters discussed the stakeholder input process as it relates to the plan of work reporting requirements. Section 102(c) of AREERA requires the 1862 land-grant institutions, 1890 land-grant institutions, and 1994 land-grant institutions receiving agricultural research, education, and extension formula funds from CSREES to establish a process for stakeholder input on the uses of such funds. As mentioned in the **Federal Register** notice for the Proposed Guidelines on April 19, 1999, CSREES is in the process of promulgating separately regulations to implement these stakeholder input requirements. See proposed stakeholder input rule, 64 FR 18534, April 14, 1999. CSREES anticipates the final rule being published by July 31, 1999.

One of the commenters supported the decision of CSREES to provide the maximum flexibility to institutions in the way they report their stakeholder input in their plans of work. The other commenter focused on the definition of *seek stakeholder input*. The previous notice for these Guidelines defined *seek stakeholder input* "means an open and fair process which allows opportunities for individuals, groups, and organizations a voice in a process that treats all with dignity and respect." The commenter urged CSREES to adopt a new definition, building upon the concepts of "open and fair," "equality of service," and "ease of access" in the Final Guidelines, as follows: "Seek stakeholder input means an open, fair, transparent, accessible, inclusive, accountable, and comprehensive process which provides opportunities for diverse individuals, groups, and organizations, especially the traditionally under-served and under-represented, to have a voice in a process and one that treats all with dignity and respect."

CSREES has modified the definition of *seek stakeholder input* to "Seek stakeholder input means an open, fair, and accessible process by which individuals, groups, and organizations may have a voice and one that treats all with dignity and respect." However, although CSREES does encourage States to implement a stakeholder input process satisfying the above definition posed by the commenter, CSREES has

recognized in consultation with the State partners that each State has unique characteristics and should implement a stakeholder input process that best suits the needs of their State. CSREES has determined to use this modified definition of *seek stakeholder input* as the lowest acceptable threshold of stakeholder input process because CSREES wishes to maintain an environment in which States may quickly modify their stakeholder input processes to respond effectively to existing and emerging critical agricultural issues. Also, CSREES does not wish to place undue administrative burdens upon the States in meeting the stakeholder input requirement that potentially may interfere with the conduct and delivery of research and extension programs.

The above commenter made three additional comments about stakeholders. First, the commenter noted that while the definition for *under-served* is referenced once in the review criteria (C.2.), the definition for *under-represented* did not appear in the Proposed Guidelines. As the commenter had thought, this was an oversight and has been included in the review criteria. Second, this commenter thought we should address *under-served* and *under-represented* stakeholders in *target audiences* (B.1.c.5) under "Program Descriptions." As mentioned previously, we have revised this section to include these stakeholders. Third, the commenter urged CSREES to broaden the definition of *under-represented* to specifically include "small farm owners and operators." CSREES has revised the definition as suggested.

Research and Extension Cooperation

Five comments were received requesting clarification of the phrase, "The manner in which research and extension, including research and extension activities funded other than through formula funds, will cooperate to address the critical issues in the State, including the activities to be carried out separately, sequentially, or jointly" under "I. Preface and Authority." This is a specific requirement of the Hatch and Smith-Lever Acts and NARETPA as amended by sections 202 and 225 of AREERA. At a minimum, States should be reporting under "Program Descriptions" on those research and extension activities, supported with Federal formula funds (allocated by CSREES and identified as formula funds for the purposes of this 5-Year Plan of Work) and the associated required matching funds. States are required to discuss other funds only under planning component #,7 *allocated resources*,

when a research and/or extension program, supported by either Federal formula funds (allocated by CSREES and identified as formula funds for purposes of this 5-Year Plan of Work) or the associated required matching funds, is also receiving funds from other sources. All that is required is a brief statement about the funding sources and how these funds contribute to the conduct and delivery of the research and/or extension program(s).

Programs, Projects, and Activities

Three comments were received on the use of the terms: "programs," "projects," and "activities." All three commenters requested that the casual use of the terms "programs" in the Proposed Guidelines should be reconciled with section 103(d)(1) of AREERA which refers to "activities," not "programs" for peer review. To these commenters, this issue was critical as their institutions would want to peer review "projects", not collections of "projects" ("programs"). "Projects" historically has been recognized by the agricultural experiment station community in planning and assigning responsibility to agricultural experiment station staff and "programs" has been recognized by the cooperative extension services in their planning and assigning responsibility to extension staff. CSREES has determined that an "activity" is either a "project," "program," or a combination thereof; and that for the sake of plan of work reporting purposes, "planned programs" are collections of these research and extension activities, or research projects and extension programs. Accordingly, a definition of "activities" and "planned programs" has been added to the Final Guidelines.

Due Date

Two commenters thought that the due date of July 15, 1999, for the 5-Year Plan of Work is unreasonable considering the workload being imposed. The requirements of the 5-Year Plan of Work as described in the Proposed Guidelines very closely resemble the requirements imposed by the Hatch and Smith-Lever Acts as amended by sections 202 and 225 of AREERA for State Plans of Work and reflect the collaborative efforts of CSREES and the State partners in developing the proposed guidelines since the enactment of AREERA on June 23, 1998. CSREES needs to receive the 5-Year Plans of Work by July 15, 1999, in order to review and approve these 5-Year Plans of Work prior to October 1, 1999, in order to guarantee the timely release of first quarter FY 2000 formula funds.

Multistate and Integrated Activity Baselines

Five comments were received expressing concern about the implementation of the Hatch and Smith-Lever Act amendments, section 105 and 204 of AREERA, particularly the establishment of the FY 1997 baselines for multistate extension activities and integrated research and extension activities. CSREES has established a workgroup comprised of representatives from the fiscal and plan of work reporting staffs at the land-grant institutions, staff from the Office of Extramural Programs, and plan of work staff from the Partnerships Unit. These workgroup participants will be meeting 6/30–7/1/99 in Washington, D.C. to make recommendations for the guidelines on the implementation of sections 105 and 204 of AREERA. This group will be focusing on three areas: (1) How to “account” for multistate extension activities and integrated research and extension activities, (2) how to establish FY 1997 baselines for multistate extension activities and integrated research and extension activities, and (3) establishment of criteria for a reduction in the minimum percentage required to be expended for multistate extension activities and integrated research and extension activities. One of the goals of this workgroup will be developing guidelines that place the least amount of administrative and fiscal reporting burden on the States while meeting the intent of the AREERA legislation.

As mentioned in the notice of the Proposed Guidelines, CSREES will be issuing separate guidance on the implementation of these two sections of AREERA. CSREES anticipates issuing this guidance by July 31, 1999.

One commenter thought that the evidence (formal agreements, letters of memorandums, contracts or other instruments) required for documentation of multistate extension activities as indicated under section II.B.4.b, “Smith-Lever Multistate Extension,” was an onerous task that added no value to the work being done and created a negative value to the paperwork now being required. The commenter also felt that this onerous paperwork would motivate States to initiate minimal multistate efforts, rather than to increase them. CSREES can appreciate the amount of paperwork generated by section 105 of AREERA. However, this requirement only applies to the minimum percentage of Federal formula funds that must be expended on multistate activities. Multistate activities reported under the 5-Year Plan of Work

component #4 of the 5-Year Plan of Work for “Smith-Lever Multistate Extension” should be only those activities used to meet the requirements imposed by section 105 of AREERA. Additional multistate activities may be identified in overall program descriptions under planning component #4, *internal and external linkages*. In contrast to the commenter’s view that this requirement may discourage multistate extension activities, CSREES feels that this requirement may actually stimulate multistate activities in States and regions and in programs where they have not existed previously.

Another commenter was unclear whether regional and/or national efforts which maximize the resources in developing program curriculum and publications are recognized in the stated criteria for multistate activities and whether national networks (technology based) with States contributing human resources should be recognized as multistate program efforts. Assuming that participation in the above activities meets the criteria set forth in the Final Guidelines (that the State staff contribute towards the impacts of the program, collaborate towards the objectives, and are involved in the outcomes), the above activities, including technology-based networks, could be identified as multistate activities for the purposes of meeting the requirements of the Smith-Lever Act amendment in section 105 of AREERA.

One commenter requested, as part of his overall comments, a waiver from the Hatch and Smith-Lever Act requirements in section 204 of AREERA that require that States expend the lesser of 25 percent or twice the percentage of funds expended in FY 1997 on integrated research and extension activities. As mentioned previously, CSREES will be issuing separate guidance on the administrative and fiscal implementation of section 204 for integrated research and extension activities.

Three comments were received requesting clarification on section 204 and its applicability to the matching funds. Section 204 only applies to the Federal funds allocated. Section II.B.5, “Integrated Research and Extension Activities,” has been revised to clarify this point.

Education and Outreach Programs

One commenter questioned the requirement under “Planned Programs” for a description of the education and outreach programs (section II.B.1.c.8) that are already underway to convey the research results and efforts to encourage multicounty cooperation in

dissemination of research results. The commenter questioned the rationale of this requirement when calling for a forward looking plan and that the requirements were busy work that add zero value to the plan of work process.” Describing the “education and outreach programs already underway to convey available research results that are pertinent to a critical agricultural issue, including the efforts to encourage multicounty cooperation in the dissemination of research results” is a requirement for the plans of work under section 202(a)(1) of AREERA which amended section 4 of the Smith-Lever Act and under section 225(a)(1) of AREERA which amended section 1444(d) of NAREPTA. As noted in the Proposed Guidelines this planning component applies only to those 5-Year Plans of Work incorporating extension activities of the 1862 and/or 1890 land-grant institutions.

Annual Update

Three comments were received on the Annual Update to the 5-Year Plan of Work. All three commenters requested that CSREES consider a “roll-forward” time frame for a plan of work that has substantive change reflected in the annual update. In other words, the 5-year clock would start over from the date of the updated 5-Year Plan of Work. Commenters suggested this for two primary reasons: (1) Reduce the 5-year rush at the Federal level to review the 5-Year Plans of Work and (2) Potentially provide additional incentive at the State level to keep a refined plan in place as planned programs evolve to address emerging critical agricultural issues.

Although CSREES is appreciative of the concern from the State partners about the “rush” to review these 5-Year Plans of Work, CSREES is committed to a timely and meaningful review process. This was demonstrated when CSREES sent an email message to the State partners entitled “SPECIAL MESSAGE RE: POW” on May 12, 1999, regarding the criteria for review of the 5-Year Plans of Work, the evaluation protocols for these plans, and the anticipated timetable. CSREES has determined to keep the existing fixed 5-Year time frame for the plan of work process in place. By keeping all the 5-Year Plans of Work on the same 5-year cycle, both the evaluation of the Annual Reports of Accomplishments and Results against the current 5-Year Plans of Work and the Federal reporting requirements, including annual budget justifications and Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) reporting, will be accomplished more effectively and more

efficiently. In addition, these 5-Year Plans of Work will have been prepared based on the existing five national goals established in CSREES Strategic Plans and linked to the five national goals within the Research, Education, and Economics (REE) Mission Areas of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Merit and Peer Review

Four comments were received about the merit review and peer review processes. One commenter noted that the merit review process must be established prior to October 1, 1999, and requested clarification whether the plan of work itself needed to be merit reviewed. Section 103(e) of AREERA requires that effective October 1, 1999, to be eligible to obtain agricultural research or extension funds for an activity, each 1862 and 1890 institution shall: (1) Establish a process for the merit review of the activity; and (2) Review the activity in accordance with the process. Only the research projects supported with Hatch Multistate Research Funds are subject to a scientific peer review which will also satisfy the merit review requirement. CSREES has intended that the merit review process and/or scientific peer review process be in place by October 1, 1999, as required by the legislation, and that a description of the process(es) be provided in the 5-Year Plan of Work. Since the Final Guidelines requires reporting on planned programs which are collections of research activities or projects and/or extension activities or programs, the plan of work does not have to be merit reviewed, but the individual research projects or activities and/or the extension programs or activities have to be merit reviewed according to the established process at the land-grant institution. And in the case of Hatch Multistate Research projects, a scientific peer review is required in lieu of a merit review.

Two of the commenters also were concerned that by having these merit reviews and scientific peer reviews conducted by the institutions, the research projects or activities and/or extension programs or activities will be subject to a review process twice. Although it may appear that research and extension activities are being reviewed twice, the merit review and/or scientific peer review of research and extension activities conducted at the institutions and the review of the 5-Year Plans of Work are evaluated against different criteria and for different purposes. The merit review and/or scientific peer review process(es) are established by the land-grant institutions within the general

framework of these Guidelines and the 5-Year Plan of Work is an evaluation of the planned programs (which are collections of research and/or extension activities) against the criteria set forth in section II.C.2., "Review Criteria."

The fourth commenter on the program review processes expressed concern that their existing merit review and scientific review processes for both research and extension activities may result in Annual Updates to the 5-Year Plan of Work each year as they perform their reviews each year. Since the Final Guidelines require reporting on planned programs which are collections of research and/or extension activities, the results of annual merit reviews and scientific peer reviews may not result in substantive changes in the 5-Year Plans of Work that would require the submission of an Annual Update to the 5-Year Plan of Work.

Separate Extension and Research Administrative Structures

One commenter noted that their cooperative extension service and their agricultural experiment station are under separate administrative structures and that it may be difficult to have consistent reporting on joint research and extension efforts. They expressed concern that they may be penalized for not being completely aligned in their reporting when they submit two separate reports. These Final Guidelines provide as much flexibility as possible in the submission of the 5-Year Plans of Work, Annual Updates to the 5-Year Plans of Work, and Annual Reports of Results and Accomplishments in order to accommodate the needs of each State and its land-grant institutions.

Withholding of Funds

One commenter noted that the Proposed Guidelines lacked a procedure to "withhold formula funds" if the goals and objectives have not been met. CSREES has had established procedures for "withholding formula funds" when certain programmatic, administrative, and fiscal requirements are not met by the land-grant institutions. The land-grant institutions are notified and given ample opportunity to satisfy these requirements prior to the next quarterly allocation of funds. These procedures have worked well in the past; while the procedures help to ensure that requirements are met, the conduct and delivery of research and extension programs are neither interrupted nor jeopardized. As stated in section II.C.1, "Schedule," adherence to the Plan of Work schedule by the recipient institution is critical to assuring the timely allocation of funds by CSREES.

Annual Reports of Accomplishments and Results

One commenter thought that the submission date for the Annual Reports of Accomplishments and Results should be March or April, instead of December 31. CSREES can appreciate institutions' desire for more time to synthesize information from the previous calendar year's research and extension activities and therefore submit a more meaningful report; however, CSREES uses these reports in preparation of CSREES budget documents as well as for questions posed by congressional committees during the annual budget process. Consequently, CSREES has not changed the due dates for the Annual Reports of Accomplishments and Results.

Another commenter suggested that some form of web-based reporting mechanism be used in the Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results for reporting on multistate extension activities and integrated research and extension activities in order to simplify the process. As the system progresses through this 5-Year Plan of Work cycle, CSREES will consider this suggestion before the first Annual Reports of Accomplishments and Results are due.

Continuing Dialogue

The last and final comment concerned the importance of continuing the dialogue between the Federal and State Partners to ensure flexibility in both the Plan of Work and the reporting against the Plan of Work. CSREES intends to invite the State partners back within the next year to engage in discussions regarding the submission of the 5-Year Plan of Work as well as the review process conducted by CSREES.

Paperwork Reduction Act

Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, as amended (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in these Final Guidelines have been reviewed and approved by OMB and given OMB Document No. 0524-0036. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no person is required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

The public reporting burden for this collection of information contained in these guidelines is estimated at 1349.44 hours per response for the 5-Year Plan of Work; 134.94 hours per response for the Annual Update to the 5-Year Plan of Work; and 1,366.67 hours per response for the Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results. This includes the time for reviewing

instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Department of Agriculture, Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Stop 7603, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-7630, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project, Washington, DC 20503. These guidelines have no additional impact on any existing data collection burden.

Pursuant to the plan of work requirements enacted in the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998, the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service hereby is implementing the Guidelines for State Plans of Work for Agricultural Research and Extension Formula Funds as follows:

Guidelines for State Plans of Work for Agricultural Research and Extension Formula Funds

Table of Contents

- I. Preface and Authority
- II. Submission of the 5-Year Plan of Work
 - A. General
 - 1. Planning Option
 - 2. Period Covered
 - 3. Projected Resources
 - 4. Submission and Due Date
 - 5. Certification
 - 6. Definitions
 - B. Components of the 5-Year Plan of Work
 - 1. Planned Programs
 - a. National Goals
 - b. Format
 - c. Program Descriptions
 - 2. Stakeholder Input Process
 - 3. Program Review Process
 - a. Merit Review
 - b. Scientific Peer Review
 - c. Reporting Requirement
 - 4. Multistate Research and Extension Activities
 - a. Hatch Multistate Research
 - b. Smith-Lever Multistate Extension
 - c. Reporting Requirement
 - 5. Integrated Research and Extension Activities
 - C. Five Year Plan of Work Evaluation by CSREES
 - 1. Schedule
 - 2. Review Criteria
 - 3. Evaluation of Multistate and Integrated Research and Extension Activities
- III. Annual Update of the 5-Year Plan of Work
 - A. Applicability
 - B. Reporting Requirement
- IV. Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results
 - A. Reporting Requirement

B. Format

I. Preface and Authority

Sections 202 and 225 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA), Public Law 105-185, enacted amendments requiring all States and 1890 institutions receiving formula funds authorized under the Hatch Act of 1887, as amended (7 U.S.C. 361a *et seq.*), the Smith-Lever Act, as amended (7 U.S.C. 341 *et seq.*), and sections 1444 and 1445 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), as amended (7 U.S.C. 3221 and 3222), to prepare and submit to the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) a plan of work for the use of those funds.

While the requirement for the Hatch Act and Smith-Lever Act funds applies to the States, CSREES assumes that in most cases the function will be performed by the 1862 land-grant institution in the States. The only "eligible institutions" to receive formula funding under sections 1444 and 1445 of NARETPA are the 1890 land-grant institutions and Tuskegee University. Therefore, these guidelines refer throughout to "institutions" to include both the 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions, including Tuskegee University.

Further, these guidelines require a plan of work that covers both research and extension. Although the District of Columbia receives extension funds under the District of Columbia Postsecondary Education Reorganization Act, Pub. L. 93-471, as opposed to the Smith-Lever Act, CSREES has determined that it should be subject to the plan of work requirements imposed under these guidelines except where expressly excluded.

All the requirements of AREERA with regard to agricultural research and extension formula funds were considered and were incorporated in these plan of work guidelines including descriptions of the following: (1) The critical short-term, intermediate, and long-term agricultural issues in the State and the current and planned research and extension programs and projects targeted to address the issues; (2) the process established to consult with stakeholders regarding the identification of critical agricultural issues in the State and the development of research and extension projects and programs targeted to address the issues; (3) the efforts made to identify and collaborate with other colleges and universities that have a unique capacity to address the

identified agricultural issues in the State and the extent of current and emerging efforts (including regional and multistate efforts) to work with those other institutions; (4) the manner in which research and extension, including research and extension activities funded other than through formula funds, will cooperate to address the critical issues in the State, including the activities to be carried out separately, sequentially, or jointly; and (5) For extension, the education and outreach programs already underway to convey available research results that are pertinent to a critical agricultural issue, including efforts to encourage multicounty cooperation in the dissemination of research information.

These guidelines also take into consideration the requirement in section 102(c) of AREERA for the 1862, 1890, and 1994 land-grant institutions receiving agricultural research, extension, and education formula funds to establish a process for receiving stakeholder input on the uses of such funds. This stakeholder input requirement, as it applies to research and extension at 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions, has been incorporated as part of the plan of work process.

The requirement of section 103(e) of AREERA also is addressed in these plan of work guidelines. This section requires that the 1862, 1890, and 1994 land-grant institutions establish a merit review process, prior to October 1, 1999, in order to obtain agricultural research, extension, and education funds. For purposes of these guidelines applicable to formula funds, a merit review process must be established for extension programs funded under sections 3(b)(1) and (c) of the Smith-Lever Act and under section 1444 of NARETPA, and for research programs funded under sections 3(c)(1) and (2) of the Hatch Act (commonly referred to as Hatch Regular Formula Funds) and under section 1445 of NARETPA. Section 104 of AREERA amended the Hatch Act of 1887 also to stipulate that a scientific peer review process (that also would satisfy the requirements of a merit review process under section 103(e)) be established for research programs funded under section 3(c)(3) of the Hatch Act (commonly referred to as Hatch Multistate Research Funds). As previously stated, these program review processes must be established prior to October 1, 1999, in order for the institutions to obtain agricultural research and extension formula funds. Consequently, a description of the merit review and scientific peer review process has been included as a requirement in the submission of the 5-Year Plan of Work.

These plan of work guidelines also require reporting on the multistate and integrated research and extension programs. Section 104 of AREERA amended the Hatch Act of 1887 to redesignate the Hatch regional research funds as the Hatch Multistate Research Fund, specifying that these funds be used for cooperative research employing multidisciplinary approaches in which a State agricultural experiment station, working with another state agricultural experiment station, the Agricultural Research Service, or a college or university, cooperates to solve the problems that concern more than one State. Section 105 of AREERA amended the Smith-Lever Act to require that each institution receiving extension formula funds under sections 3(b) and (c) of the Smith-Lever Act expend for multistate activities in FY 2000 and thereafter a percentage that is at least equal to the lesser of 25 percent or twice the percentage of funds expended by the institution for multistate activities in FY 1997. Section 204 of AREERA amended both the Hatch and Smith-Lever Acts to require that each institution receiving agricultural research and extension formula funds under the Hatch Act and sections 3(b) and (c) of the Smith-Lever Act expend for integrated research and extension activities in FY 2000 and thereafter a percentage that is at least equal to the lesser of 25 percent or twice the percentage of funds expended by the institution for integrated research and extension activities in FY 1997. These sections also require that the institutions include in the plan of work a description of the manner in which they will meet these multistate and integrated requirements.

These applicable percentages apply to the Federal agricultural research and extension formula funds only. Federal formula funds that are used by the institution for a fiscal year for integrated activities may also be counted to satisfy the multistate activities requirement.

The multistate and integrated research and extension requirements do not apply to formula funds received by American Samoa, Guam, Micronesia, Northern Marianas, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Since the Smith-Lever Act is not directly applicable, the multistate and integrated extension requirements do not apply to extension funds received by the District of Columbia, except to the extent it voluntarily complies.

The amendments made by sections 105 and 204 of AREERA also provide that the Secretary of Agriculture may reduce the minimum percentage required to be expended by the institution for multistate and integrated

activities in the case of hardship, infeasibility, or other similar circumstance beyond the control of the institution. CSREES will issue separate guidance on the establishment of the FY 1997 baseline percentages for multistate activities and integrated activities and on requests for reduction in the required minimum percentage.

Also included in these guidelines are instructions on how to report on the annual accomplishments and results of the planned programs contained in the 5-Year Plan of Work, information on the evaluation of accomplishments and results, and information on when and how to update the 5-Year Plan of Work if necessary.

II. Submission of the 5-Year Plan of Work

A. General

1. Planning Option

This document provides guidance for preparing the plan of work with preservation of institutional autonomy and programmatic flexibility within the Federal-State Partnership. The plan of work is a 5-year prospective plan that covers the period of fiscal year 2000 through 2004, with the option to submit annual updates to the 5-Year Plan of Work. The 5-Year Plans of Work may be prepared for an institution's individual functions (*i.e.*, research or extension activities), for an individual institution (including the planning of research and extension activities), or for state-wide activities (a 5-year research and/or extension plan of work for all the eligible institutions in a State). Each 5-Year Plan of Work must reflect the content of the program(s) funded by Federal agricultural research and extension formula funds and the required matching funds. This 5-Year Plan of Work must describe not only how the program(s) address critical short-term, intermediate, and long-term agricultural issues in a State, but how it relates to and is part of the broad national goals.

2. Period Covered

The 5-Year Plan of Work should cover the period from October 1, 1999, through September 30, 2004.

3. Projected Resources

The resources that are allocated for various planned programs in the 5-Year Plan of Work, in terms of human and fiscal measures, should be included and projected over the next five years. The baseline for the institution's or State's initial plan (for five years) should be the Federal agricultural research and extension formula funds for FY 1999

and the required matching funds. During the course of the 5-Year Plan of Work, if the baseline for the formula funds at the FY 1999 level changes by more than 10 percent in one year or by 20 percent or more cumulatively during the 5-year period, a revised 5-Year Plan of Work should be submitted as an annual update the following fiscal year.

4. Submission and Due Date

The 5-Year Plan of Work must be submitted by July 15, 1999, to the Partnerships Unit of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture. It is preferred that these 5-Year Plans of Work be submitted electronically to bhewitt@reeusda.gov in either WordPerfect file format, Microsoft Word file format, or ASCII file format. If this submission method is not available, an original and two copies of the 5-Year Plan of Work should be submitted to: Partnerships/POW; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Stop 2214; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW.; Washington, DC. 20250-2214.

5. Certification

The 5-Year Plan of Work must be signed by the 1862 Extension Director, 1862 Research Director, 1890 Extension Administrator, and/or 1890 Research Director, depending on the planning option chosen.

6. Definitions

For the purpose of implementing the Guidelines for State Plans of Work for Agricultural Research and Extension Formula Funds, the following definitions are applicable:

Activities means either research projects or extension programs.

Formula funds for the purposes of the plan of work guidelines means funding provided by formula to 1862 land-grant institutions under section 3 of the Hatch Act of 1887, as amended (7 U.S.C. 361a) and sections 3(b)(1) and (c) of the Smith-Lever Act, as amended (7 U.S.C. 343(b)(1) and (c)) and to the 1890 land-grant institutions under sections 1444 and 1445 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended (7 U.S.C. 3221 and 3222).

Formula funds for the purposes of stakeholder input means the funding by formula to the 1862 land-grant institutions and 1890 land-grant institutions covered by these plan of work guidelines as well as the formula funds provided under the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Program (16 U.S.C. 582, *et seq.*), the

Animal Health and Disease Research Program (7 U.S.C. 3195), and the education payments made to the 1994 land-grant institutions under section 534(a) of Public Law 103-382 (7 U.S.C. 301 note).

Integrated or joint activities means jointly planned, funded, and interwoven activities between research and extension to solve problems. This includes the generation of knowledge and the transfer of information and technology.

Merit review means an evaluation whereby the quality and relevance to program goals are assessed.

Multi-institutional means two or more institutions within the same or different States or territories that will collaborate in the planning and implementation of programs.

Multistate means collaborative efforts that reflect the programs of institutions located in at least two or more States or territories.

Multi-disciplinary means efforts that represent research, education, and/or extension programs in which principal investigators or other collaborators from two or more disciplines or fields of specialization work together to accomplish specified objectives.

Outcome indicator means an assessment of the results of a program activity compared to its intended purpose.

Output indicator means a tabulation, calculation, or recording of activity of effort expressed in quantitative or qualitative manner which measures the products or services produced by the planned program.

Planned programs means collections of research projects or activities and/or extension programs or activities.

Program review means either a merit review or a scientific peer review.

Scientific peer review means an evaluation performed by experts with scientific knowledge and technical skills to conduct the proposed work

whereby the technical quality and relevance to program goals are assessed.

Seek stakeholder input means an open, fair, and accessible process by which individuals, groups, and organizations may have a voice, and one that treats all with dignity and respect.

Stakeholder is any person who has the opportunity to use or conduct agricultural research, extension, and education activities in the State.

Under-served means individuals, groups, and/or organizations whose needs have not been addressed in past programs.

Under-represented means individuals, groups, and/or organizations especially those who may not have participated fully including, but not limited to, women, racial and ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, limited resource clients, and small farm owners and operators.

B. Components of the 5-Year Plan of Work

1. Planned Programs

a. National Goals. The 5-Year Plan of Work should be based on the five national goals established in the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) Agency Strategic Plans and linked to the five national goals within the Research, Education, and Economics (REE) Mission Area of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These national goals were adopted by the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board. These goals were developed from stakeholder input in conjunction with existing Federal-State Partnerships. The body of the 5-Year Plan of Work narrative should focus on these goals and outcomes.

Currently the national goals are:

Goal 1: An agricultural system that is highly competitive in the global economy. Through research and education, empower the agricultural system with knowledge that will

improve competitiveness in domestic production, processing, and marketing.

Goal 2: A safe and secure food and fiber system. To ensure an adequate food and fiber supply and food safety through improved science based detection, surveillance, prevention, and education.

Goal 3: A healthy, well-nourished population. Through research and education on nutrition and development of more nutritious foods, enable people to make health promoting choices.

Goal 4: Greater harmony between agriculture and the environment. Enhance the quality of the environment through better understanding of and building on agriculture's and forestry's complex links with soil, water, air, and biotic resources.

Goal 5: Enhanced economic opportunity and quality of life for Americans. Empower people and communities, through research-based information and education, to address economic and social challenges facing our youth, families, and communities.

b. Format. As mentioned under the Planning Options section, an institution or State may opt to submit independent plans for the various units (e.g. 1862 research) or an integrated plan which includes all units in the institution or State.

Regardless of the option chosen, the 5-Year Plan of Work should be reported in the appropriate matrix format, each cell of which identifies planned programs that fall under one of the national program goals. If an integrated 5-Year Plan of Work is submitted, the various units within the entity for which the 5-Year Plan of Work has been developed (i.e., 1862 research, 1890 research, 1862 extension, 1890 extension) would appear on the vertical axis. Individual cells within the matrix would be used to summarize the State programs.

The following example illustrates the desired matrix.

	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5
1862 Research					
1862 Extension					
1890 Research					
1890 Extension					

c. Program Descriptions. Program descriptions presented in a narrative form or in each cell of the matrix for a planned program will be related to one of the five national goals and should reflect the following planning components:

1. The *statement of issue* to be addressed. This component should discuss the critical agricultural issue within the State that was identified and being targeted by this planned program. This component may also reference the stakeholder input which identified the critical agricultural issue in the State

and the need for the targeted research and/or extension program.

2. The *performance goal(s)* is a target level of performance. The *output indicators* should reflect the tabulation, calculation, or recording of activity or effort expressed in quantitative or qualitative manner which measures the

products or services produced by the program. The *outcome indicators* should assess the results of a program activity compared to its intended goal.

3. The *key program component(s)* identify the major efforts included in the work to be conducted.

4. The *internal and external linkages* include activities identified as integrated, multidisciplinary, multi-institutional, and/or multistate. This component may also address any efforts made to identify and collaborate with other colleges and universities that have a unique capacity to address the identified agricultural issues within the State and the extent of current and emerging efforts (including regional efforts) to work with those institutions. Within this planning component, discussion should be made regarding the efficiencies achieved through these internal and external linkages both in the use of resources and/or in the ability to solve critical agricultural issues.

5. The *target audiences* identifies the set of stakeholders, customers, and/or consumers for which the program is intended. The 5-Year Plans of Work should address the institution's commitment to facilitating equality of service and ease of access to all research and extension programs and services and to meeting the needs of underserved and under-represented individuals, groups, and/or organizations.

6. The *program duration* should be expressed as short-term, intermediate (one to five years), or long-term (over five years).

7. The *allocated resources* (human and fiscal measures) must be described for each planned program. This component may not only include the amount of Federal agricultural research and/or extension formula funds and matching funds allocated to this planned program, but also the manner in which funds, other than formula funds, will be expended to address the critical issues being targeted by this planned program.

8. *Education and outreach programs* must be described that are already underway to convey the research results that are pertinent to the critical agricultural issue identified in the "Statement of Issue." Efforts to encourage multicounty cooperation in dissemination of research results should also be identified. This planning component applies only to those 5-Year Plans of Work incorporating extension activities of the 1862 and/or 1890 land-grant institutions.

2. Stakeholder Input Process

Section 102(c) of AREERA requires the 1862 land-grant institutions, 1890 land-grant institutions, and 1994 land-grant institutions receiving agricultural research, extension, and education formula funds from CSREES to establish a process for stakeholder input on the uses of such funds. CSREES is in the process of promulgating separately in the **Federal Register** regulations to implement this stakeholder input requirement.

As a component of the 5-Year Plan of Work, each institution must report on the actions taken to seek stakeholder input that encourages their participation and a brief statement of the process used by the institution to identify stakeholders and to collect input from them. This report will be required annually and may be submitted with the Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results. This component will satisfy the reporting requirements imposed by the separately promulgated regulations on stakeholder input. However, the above procedures are contingent upon the outcome of the Final Rule on Stakeholder Input Requirements for Recipients of Agricultural Research, Education, and Extension Formula Funds.

3. Program Review Process

a. *Merit Review.* Effective October 1, 1999, each 1862 land-grant institution and 1890 land-grant institution must establish a process for merit review in order to obtain agricultural research or extension formula funds.

b. *Scientific Peer Review.* A scientific peer review is required for all research funded under the Hatch Act of 1887 Multistate Research Fund. For such research, this scientific peer review will satisfy the merit review requirement specified above.

c. *Reporting Requirement.* As a component of the 5-year Plan of Work, each institution depending on the type of program review required will provide a description of the merit review process or scientific peer review process established at their institution. This description should include the process used in the selection of reviewers with expertise relevant to the effort and appropriate scientific and technical standards.

4. Multistate Research and Extension Activities

a. *Hatch Multistate Research.* Effective October 1, 1998, the Hatch Multistate Research Fund replaced the Hatch Regional Research Program. The Hatch Multistate Research Fund must be

used for research employing multidisciplinary approaches to solve research problems that concern more than one State. For such research, State agricultural experiment stations must partner with another experiment station, the Agricultural Research Service, or another college or university.

b. *Smith-Lever Multistate Extension.* Effective October 1, 1999, the cooperative extension programs at the 1862 land-grant institutions must expend up to 25 percent of their formula funds provided under sections 3(b)(1) and (c) of the Smith-Lever Act for activities in which two or more State extension services cooperate to solve problems that concern more than one State. As required by law, CSREES will work with each 1862 land-grant institution to identify the amount each institution expended for multistate extension activities for fiscal year (FY) 1997. For FY 2000 and thereafter, cooperative extension programs must commit two times their FY 1997 baseline percentage or 25 percent, whichever is less, for multistate activities. Institutions should describe the contributions of extension staff and programs toward impacts rather than to describe the programs. Each participating State or territory must be a collaborator towards objectives and involved in the outcomes. Evidence of the proposed collaboration must be provided in the 5-Year Plan of Work submitted by each State. This planning is documented through formal agreements, letters of memorandums, contracts, or other instruments that provide primary evidence that a multistate relationship exists.

c. *Reporting Requirements.* The 5-Year Plan of Work should include a description of the Multistate Research, where applicable, and Multistate Extension programs as specified above and these programs must be reported consistently across the units of an institution as well as with the 5-Year Plan of Work of the cooperating State(s) or State institutions.

5. Integrated Research and Extension Activities

Effective October 1, 1999, up to 25 percent of all funds provided under section 3 of the Hatch Act and under section 3(b)(1) and (c) of the Smith-Lever Act must be spent on activities that integrate cooperative research and extension. As required by law, CSREES will work with each 1862 land-grant institution to establish the institution's baseline for integrated research and extension activities for FY 1997. For FY 2000 and thereafter, 1862 land-grant institutions must commit twice the FY

1997 baseline percentage or 25 percent, whichever is less, for integrated activities. Integration may occur within the State or between units within two or more States. Integrated programming must be reported in the 5-Year Plan of Work and be reported consistently across the units of the institutions as well as with the 5-Year Plan of Work submitted by cooperating State(s). Federal formula funds used by a State for integrated activities may also be counted to satisfy the multistate research and the multistate extension activity requirements. The requirements of this section apply only to the Federal funds.

C. 5-Year Plan of Work Evaluation by CSREES

1. Schedule

All 5-Year Plans of Work will be evaluated by CSREES. The 5-Year Plans of Work will either be accepted by CSREES without change or returned to the institution, with clear and detailed recommendations for its modification. The submitting institution(s) will be notified by CSREES of its determination within 90 days (review to be completed in 60 days, communications to the institutions allowing a 30-day response) of receipt of the document. Adherence to the Plan of Work schedule by the recipient institution is critical to assuring the timely allocation of funds by CSREES. Five Year Plans of Work accepted by CSREES will remain in effect for five years and will be publicly available in a CSREES database. CSREES will notify all institutions of a need for a new 5-year plan of work two years prior to the plan's expiration on September 30.

2. Review Criteria

CSREES will evaluate the 5-Year Plans of Work to determine if they address agricultural issues of critical importance to the State; identify the alignment and realignment of programs to address those critical issues; identify the involvement of stakeholders in the planning process; give attention to under-served and under-represented

populations; indicate the level of Federal formula funds in proportion to all other funds at the director or administrator level; provide evidence of multistate, multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary and integrated activities; and identify the expected outcomes and impacts from the proposed 5-Year Plan of Work.

3. Evaluation of Multistate and Integrated Research and Extension Activities

CSREES will be using the Annual Reports of Accomplishments and Results to evaluate the success of multistate, multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary activities and joint research and extension activities, in addressing critical agricultural issues identified in the 5-Year Plans of Work. CSREES will be using the following evaluation criteria: (1) Did the planned program address the critical issues of strategic importance, including those identified by the stakeholders? (2) Did the planned program address the needs of under-served and under-represented populations of the State(s)? (3) Did the planned program describe the expected outcomes and impacts? and (4) Did the planned program result in improved program effectiveness and/or efficiency?

III. Annual Update of the 5-Year Plan of Work

A. Applicability

An annual update to the 5-Year Plan of Work is optional and is only required if: (1) There is a substantive change in planned programs; (2) if the change in Federal agricultural research and extension formula funding is 10 percent or greater in one year from the FY 1999 base year; or (3) if the cumulative change during the five year period is 20 percent or greater than the FY 1999 base year.

B. Reporting Requirement

If a revised 5-Year Plan of Work is required, or if the institution(s) chooses to submit an optional update to the 5-Year Plan of Work, it should be submitted at the beginning of the next plan of work cycle (July 1) to either the

same electronic mail address or regular mail address as listed for the submission of the 5-Year Plan of Work.

IV. Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results

1. Reporting Requirement

The 5-Year Plan of Work for a reporting unit, institution, or State should form the basis for annually reporting its accomplishments and results. This report will be due on or before December 31 each year with the first report being due on December 31, 2000, for FY 2000. This report should be submitted to either the same electronic mail address or regular mail address as listed for the submission of the 5-Year Plan of Work.

2. Format

This annual report should include the relevant information related to each component of the program in the matrix cells of the 5-Year Plan of Work. Accomplishments and results reporting should involve two parts. First, institutions should submit an annual set of impact statements linked to sources of funding. Strict attention to just the preceding year is not expected in all situations. Some impact statements may need to cover ten or more years of activity. Focus should be given to the benefits received by targeted end-users. Second, institutions should submit annual results statements based on the indicators of the outputs and outcomes for the activities undertaken the preceding year. These should be identified as short-term, intermediate, or long-term critical issues in the 5-Year Plan of Work. Attention should be given to highlighting multistate, multi-institutional, and multidisciplinary and integrated activities, as appropriate to the 5-Year Plan of Work.

Done at Washington, D.C., this 25 day of 1999.

I. Miley Gonzalez,

Under Secretary, Research, Education, and Economics.

[FR Doc. 99-16774 Filed 6-30-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-22-P