

## **Program Priority**

### **Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)**

#### **Rapid Response Food and Agricultural Science for Emergency Issues**

#### **The Emerging Fruit and Vegetable Food Safety Threat of Angiostrongyliasis (rat lungworm)**

Program Code - 97100

National Program Leaders – Drs Jeanette Thurston (202-720-7166 or [jthurston@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:jthurston@csrees.usda.gov)) or Mark Poth (202-401-5244 or [mpoth@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:mpoth@csrees.usda.gov))

Letters of Intent – not required

Application Deadline – for consideration for this priority please respond by COB Eastern

Time on **July 20, 2009**

How to Apply – PLEASE see the full request for applications for AFRI at

[http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/rfas/afri\\_rfa.html](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/rfas/afri_rfa.html); and the “[CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/grants).”

## **Please Note**

This is an AFRI Conference Grant funding opportunity. Conference grants support scientific meetings that bring together scientists to identify research, education, or extension needs, update information, or advance an area of science are recognized as integral parts of scientific efforts within the scope of AFRI. Support for a limited number of meetings covering subject matter encompassed by this solicitation will be considered for partial or, if modest, total support. Individual conference grants are not expected to exceed \$100,000 and are not renewable. Indirect costs are *not* allowed for conference grants (for more information on conference grants please refer to page 125 of the AFRI RFA, noting the slight variations found in this announcement).

## **Background**

A recent outbreak of *Parastrongylus cantonesis*, also referred to as rat lungworm, has increased concern for the transmission of this parasite in fresh vegetable crops. As little as one larvae (produced in intermediate snail or slug host) may be infectious to humans. While most infections are asymptomatic or mild (mild headache, stiffness in head and back), they can also result in very severe (migration to the brain causing coma, blindness, facial paralysis) disease and death. Infectious larvae are present in snails and slugs and in the slime-trail of these pests. The link between minimally processed produce from home gardens and *P. cantonesis* infection is considered the cause of a recent outbreak in Hawaii. This and other outbreaks demonstrate a real concern regarding contamination and transmission of *P. cantonesis* by home-grown produce. The potential human health risk of commercialized agriculture is relatively unknown.

## **FY 2009 Priority**

The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, through the Rapid Response Food and Agricultural Science for Emergency Issues program will support a conference to examine what is known about, and determine how best to respond to this potential threat to food safety. This conference is expected to cover:

- disease characteristics (infectious dose, relationship between dose and severity of disease, concentrations shed or produced in host, etc);
- the transmission routes between natural hosts, intermediate hosts and humans (prevalence of parasite in rodent and snail/slug populations);
- environmental fate (in intermediate host and in slime trail on fresh crops);

- other environmental sources (are there multiple natural and intermediate hosts; i.e., can the parasite infect multiple species of rats, slugs and snails that are indigenous to areas where fresh vegetable crops are grown?);
- what diagnostic methods are available for parasite detection in humans, rodents, snails, and environmental samples (water, soil and plants);
- the ability of commonly applied practices (for example, washing with water) to reduce or eliminate parasites on produce;
- the potential for water contamination and whether commonly applied water disinfectants would kill the infectious larval stage; and
- what prevention and education strategies are used by health departments to protect and inform the public of this disease?

In addition to identifying the current state of the science for this parasite and its importance to agriculture, knowledge gaps will be identified as a base for stimulating research in the scientific community and to point the way to the development of better intervention and control strategies.

**Conference Grant Applications (instructions beginning on Page 125 of the AFRI RFA and modified in this announcement)**

**Potential applicants are strongly advised to consult the appropriate National Program Leader before preparing their conference application.** To submit a Conference application, follow the guidelines for Research, Education, Extension, or Integrated Grant Applications (Part IV, B., 1. of the AFRI RFA), noting the following differences:

**a. R&R Other Project Information Form**

(1) *Field 6. Project Summary/Abstract – PDF Attachment.* Title the attachment as ‘Project Summary’ in the document header and save file as ‘Project Summary’.

State the objectives of the conference, symposium, or workshop, as well as the proposed location and probable inclusive date(s) of the conference. Please state in the summary the specific program priority(ies) to which the project applies.

(2) *Field 7. Project Narrative – PDF Attachment. 18-Page Limit.* Title the attachment as ‘Project Narrative’ in the document header and save file as ‘Project Narrative’.

**PLEASE NOTE: For Conference Grant Applications, the Project Narrative section may not exceed a total of 18 single- or double-spaced pages, including figures and tables.** These page limitations apply regardless of whether figures or tables are included. All pages, including those with figures and tables, should be numbered sequentially. Applications exceeding the applicable page limitation will be returned without review. The page limitations have been established to ensure fair and equitable competition.

Describe the conference proposed, including:

- a) A justification for the meeting;
- b) A proposed program (or agenda) for the conference, including a listing of scheduled participants and their institutional affiliations; and
- c) The method of announcement or invitation that will be used.

### **c. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile**

(1) *Attach Biographical Sketch Field – PDF Attachment. 2-Page limit (including publications listings) per submitting PD(s).* Title the attachment as ‘Biographical Sketch’ in the document header and save file as ‘Biographical Sketch’.

Include a Biographical Sketch for submitting PD(s) with a brief listing of relevant publications.

The Conflict of Interest lists should not be included in the biographical sketch and must be provided as a separate document, see item e. (1) of this section.

### **d. R&R Budget**

The budget for the conference may include an appropriate amount for transportation and subsistence costs for participants and for other conference-related costs. Conference awards funded by this Rapid Response RFA may not exceed 12 month in duration, are not expected to exceed \$100,000, and are not renewable. Conference awards may not include indirect costs. Include an itemized breakdown of all support requested from the AFRI in the Budget Justification (Field K. of the R&R Budget).

### **e. Supplemental Information Form**

(1) **IMPORTANT** - *Field 8. Conflict of Interest List – PDF Attachment. No Page Limit.* Title the attachment as ‘Conflict of Interest’ in the document header and save file as ‘Conflict of Interest’.

**A Conflict of Interest List is required for all applications submitted to the AFRI. The Conflict of Interest List should be provided as a separate PDF attachment and not included in the vitae or resume.**

A suggested template for the Conflict of Interest List can be found at:  
[http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/templates/conflict\\_of\\_interest.doc](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/templates/conflict_of_interest.doc).

Include for all submitting PD(s).