

NIFA in the News – Week of October 1, 2012

Curious as to what happens to all the news releases you see in the [NIFA newsroom](#)? Here's the weekly summary of NIFA's mentions in the news media for the week of October 1, 2012.

In the News

Earth's Water System Could Be Affected By Land Use, Climate Change And Ecosystems (Red Orbit 9/26). We don't yet understand the how the connections between water sustainability and hydrologic processes will be affected by climate change, but to better this understanding, the National Science Foundation (NSF) has teamed up with the United States Departments of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The collaboration has awarded grants totaling almost \$27 million through the Water Sustainability and Climate (WSC) program. [Link](#)

WV State University receives \$1.6 million research grant (The State Journal 9/27). West Virginia State University announced Sept. 27 it will receive more than \$1.6 million in research grant funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The university will use part of the money to help fund three projects focusing on research to improve agriculture production in West Virginia. [Link](#)

Vilsack announces last of specialty crop funding from 2008 farm bill (AgriPulse 10/1). Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced \$101 million grants to support specialty crop initiatives, while emphasizing the challenges for USDA in light of the expired 2008 farm bill. Vilsack's announcement today also highlighted \$46 million in new and continuing grants through the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI). Specialty crops, defined as "fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture," are supported by SCRI projects through USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

Citrus Industry: Feds Gives Fla. \$9 Mil. For Greening Fight (The Ledger 10/1). At a time when dubious campaign promises fill the air like mosquitoes on a muggy summer day, at least one promise has been kept. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will finance a five-year, \$9 million research program seeking to disable the Asian citrus psyllid's ability to host the deadly citrus greening bacteria. If successful, it would limit the disease's spread in Florida and possibly halt it in other citrus states. U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson and U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on Monday announced the nationwide research project at a Washington-based teleconference. [Link](#)

Farm bill inaction hangs up specialty crop grants, research (The Packer 10/1). The U.S. Department of Agriculture has allocated more than \$100 million for two specialty crop programs, but funds won't be available until Congress passes a new farm bill. In a conference call Oct. 1, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack announced \$55 million in Specialty Crop Block Grant funding and \$46 million for new and continuing specialty crop research. But the news doesn't mean much until Congress passes a farm bill. "The unfortunate circumstance is that these are parts of programs that will not be able to be funded without a bill," Vilsack said. "They are some of the casualties of congressional inaction. The last thing producers needed was for Congress to leave town early." [Link](#)

Florida Citrus Growers Thank USDA for \$9 Million Research Grant (Daily Squeeze 10/1). Florida Citrus Mutual thanked the U.S Department of Agriculture today after the agency announced it awarded a \$9 million grant to help support citrus research. "This is a tremendous opportunity to advance research into citrus greening so we can save our \$9 billion industry," said Michael W. Sparks, executive VP/CEO of Florida Citrus Mutual. "I must commend Secretary Vilsack for his leadership on this issue and understanding that the key to beating this insidious disease lies in the laboratory." [Link](#)

Citrus Research Foundation to Get \$9 Million USDA Grant (Southeast Ag Net 10/1). The U.S. Department of Agriculture Monday announced a \$9 million research grant to the Citrus Research and Development Foundation to support fighting citrus greening, or HLB. The following report is from Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack, Florida Senator Bill Nelson and Mike Sparks with Citrus Mutual discussing the importance of the research grant and the overall Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. [Link](#)

USDA Invests in Specialty Crop Grants (Farm Futures 10/2). Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on Monday announced \$101 million in grants to support America's specialty crops producers in developing local and regional markets, improving access to food and allow growers to improve profitability through better business decisions. Approximately \$55 million of the total will be invested in 56 specialty crop block grants to states that fund initiatives that strengthen markets and expand economic opportunities for local and regional producers. Some of the Specialty Crop Block grants initiatives include increasing nutritional knowledge, distribution efficiency, proper handling and processing and research projects. The program also supports developing new seed varieties, controlling pests, and expanding access to food in food desert communities. [Link](#)

Vilsack Announces Investments in Specialty Crops (Wisconsin Ag Connection 10/2). Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced \$101 million in grants to support America's specialty crops producers, who provide the fruits, vegetables, nuts and other nutritious foods for millions of healthy American meals each day. Approximately \$55 million of the total will be invested in 56 specialty crop block grants to states that fund 748 initiatives across the country to strengthen markets and expand economic opportunities for local and regional producers. [Link](#)

Federal Grant Funds Precision Agriculture Partnership Between FHSU, HCC (Hays Post 10/2). Agriculture at Fort Hays State University and Hutchinson Community College has been awarded a \$277,243 grant from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture for a precision agriculture partnership. [Link](#)

Florida gets \$9 million to study citrus disease (AP/CBS News 10/2). Florida is getting \$9 million to study the citrus greening disease. The \$9 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture is going to the Citrus Research and Development Foundation in Lake Alfred, Fla. The Lake Alfred research project is working to halt greening by stopping the ability of insects to spread the disease from infected trees to healthy ones. Citrus greening is a bacterial disease that can weaken a tree's productivity. By some estimates, it has cost Florida \$3.6 billion in lost orange juice production and jobs. [Link](#)

USDA grants \$9M to fund citrus research (Orlando Business Journal 10/2). The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced Monday it has granted \$9 million to fund research to search for a way to control the citrus disease known as "greening." The greening bacteria destroys citrus fruit and is carried by an insect known as the Asian citrus psyllid. Since 2006, greening has cost the state of Florida more than \$3.6 billion and 6,600 jobs, according to a University of Florida study, the South Florida Business Journal reports. [Link](#)

Florida Citrus Growers thank USDA for \$9 million research grant (Freshplaza.com 10/2). Florida Citrus Mutual thanked the USDA today after the agency announced it awarded a \$9 million grant to help support citrus research. "This is a tremendous opportunity to advance research into citrus greening so we can save our \$9 billion industry," said Michael W. Sparks, executive VP/CEO of Florida Citrus Mutual. The \$9 million will come from the USDA's Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI), a Farm Bill program designed to promote specialty crop research. The grant augments \$2 million in funding the USDA appropriated to the Agricultural Research Service facility in Ft. Pierce, Fla., earlier this year to study citrus greening. [Link](#)

Department of Agriculture Awarded USDA grant (Wayne County Journal Banner 10/3). The Department of Agriculture at Southeast Missouri State University has been awarded a two-year \$30,000 grant entitled "The Missouri Higher Education Partnership for Agriculture Relevancy." The USDA-National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant focuses on improving agriculture and renewable resources teaching. [Link](#)

Research hopes to verify metrics for tomatoes, leafy greens (The Grower 10/4). A research project is attempting to scientifically confirm what experts believe are the best food safety practices for tomato and leafy greens production, processing and transportation. The United Fresh Produce Association Washington Public Policy Conference featured an Oct. 2 workshop on the multiyear development of the metrics, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the Specialty Crops Research Initiative. [Link](#)

California citrus receives research funding (Fruit Net 10/5). California's citrus industry has given its thanks for aid securing US\$9m in government funding for research efforts Peak industry body California Citrus Mutual (CCM) has thanked US senators Barbara Boxer and Diane Feinstein for their support of the industry's research efforts, following the announcement earlier this week of US\$9m in funding for the USDA's Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI). The US\$9m grant will support citrus research funded by the SCRI, and CCM said the senators' support was critical to securing the funding. [Link](#)

Iowa State Receives Grant for Education Center (National Hog Farmer 10/5). A federal grant announced this week will help to propel Iowa State University's (ISU) Swine Medicine Education Center (SMEC) from a regional presence to a national leader that will attract veterinary students from across the country, says Locke Karriker, DVM, the director of the SMEC and an ISU associate professor of veterinary diagnostic and production animal medicine. The three-year, \$713,847 Higher Education Challenge Grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will transform SMEC into a national center of excellence and a resource for providing unparalleled hands-on opportunities to veterinary students across the United States who want to specialize in swine medicine, Karriker says. [Link](#)

Morgan County Extension offers 'Small Steps' class (Fort Morgan Times 10/5). Small Steps to Health and Wealth shows participants how financial problems can affect overall health and how poor health can impact building financial resources and wealth. Participants in this program discover links between their own health and wealth habits and identify small changes which can make a big difference. This program is provided free as a pilot program funded by USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)



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