

NIFA in the News – Week of October 17, 2011

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In the News

NIFA NEWS WEEKLY REPORT

October 20, 2011

In the News

Workshops empower farmers, ranchers (High Plains Journal 10/14). Getting out of bed can be difficult for a person with rheumatoid arthritis or muscular sclerosis. For ranchers and farmers, these types of diagnoses can make running their agricultural operations nearly impossible. Colorado AgrAbility Project, a NIFA-funded program run by Goodwill Industries of Denver and Colorado State University Extension, will host a series of local workshops to provide information to farm and ranch families with disabilities and to professionals who work with them about programs and tools to help operate their farm or ranch despite physical challenges. [Link](#)

UW To Lead National Effort To Improve Quality, Safety Of Processed Potatoes (Channel 3000 10/14). University of Wisconsin-Madison researchers have been selected to lead a national, multi-institution effort to improve the quality and safety of processed potatoes, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture announced. The \$3.7 million Specialty Crop Research Initiative grant will support an effort to reduce the amount of acrylamide, a potential carcinogen, in french fries and potato chips, without sacrificing the taste and texture that make these products so popular with consumers. [Link](#)

UW-Madison: To lead national effort to improve quality, safety of processed potatoes (Wisconsin Business 10/14). University of Wisconsin-Madison researchers have been selected to lead a national, multi-institution effort to improve the quality and safety of processed potatoes, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) announced today (Oct. 14). The \$3.7 million Specialty Crop Research Initiative grant will support an effort to reduce the amount of acrylamide, a potential carcinogen, in french fries and potato chips, without

sacrificing the taste and texture that make these products so popular with consumers. [Link](#)

NIFA provides more research funding for specialty crops (Agri-Pulse 10/14). USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is awarding 29 grants across 19 states, totaling \$46 million, through its Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI). [Link](#)

Researchers get \$4.5M for next generation grapes (ECN 10/14). Got Concord in the refrigerator, Pinot in the wine rack, or Thompson Seedless in the fruit bowl? These familiar grape varieties will be making room for the next generation of improved grapes, with a boost from two grants totaling \$4.5 million. The projects are funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI). [Link](#)

Colby Community College first to teach in-house animal stem cell therapy (KSCW 10/14). Friday Colby Community College became the first veterinary technology program in the U.S. to train students on in-house animal stem cell therapy. Colby CC was part of the initial veterinary technology programs established in the nation and is the only program in Kansas fully accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association. The college recently received a \$960,000 grant from the United States Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture to develop a Distance Learning Veterinary Technology Program. [Link](#)

USDA/NIFA invests in America's specialty crops with research and extension activities in 19 states (Seedquest 10/14). Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan today announced 29 grants across 19 states to develop and share science-based tools to address the needs of America's specialty crop industry. USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is awarding the grants, totaling \$46 million, through its Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI). [Link](#)

Agriculture workshops helping guide businesses (Willows Journal 10/14). Northern California Regional Land Trust will host a series of agriculture workshops on marketing, business, financial and planning skills necessary in helping keep such businesses thriving during the transition of farm and ranch ownership changes. The project is made possible by a Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, USDA, grant. They are open to residents of Tehama, Glenn and Butte counties. [Link](#)

UGA gets \$1.2M grant to study nutrition in pecans (AP/CBS Money Watch/Atlanta Journal Constitution/The Republic 10/14). A University of Georgia researcher on Friday was awarded a \$1.2 million federal grant to study the nutritional benefits of pecans and offer those findings to help promote the nuts, which are fetching record prices thanks to exploding demand in China and other markets overseas. Georgia is the nation's largest pecan producer. The state is projected to produce 90 million pounds this year, more than a third of the expected U.S. total,

according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The USDA grant will fund research by UGA food science professor Ronald Pegg, who is working to expound on studies that suggest eating pecans may help protect against heart disease. He also is looking into antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties and other benefits that may be unique to pecans. [Link](#)

Specialty crops across U.S. get \$46 million boost (Western Farm Press 10/14).

Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan announced 29 grants across 19 states to develop and share science-based tools to address the needs of America's specialty crop industry. USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is awarding the grants, totaling \$46 million, through its Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI). "Over the last 60 years, agriculture, including horticulture, has become increasingly reliant on science and technology to maintain profitable production," Merrigan said. "Specialty crop producers in the United States—as with all of American agriculture—are seeing sales surge both domestically and abroad as consumers search for high quality, 'Grown in America' fruits, vegetables and tree nuts. These projects will help provide specialty crop producers with the information and tools they need to successfully grow, process and market safe and high quality products, supporting jobs and opportunities for Americans working in specialty crops. From herbs to apples, from walnuts to grapes, specialty crops are central to the richness of American agriculture." [Link](#)

Michigan State University gets federal research grants for apples, cherries and other crops (The Republic 10/15).

Michigan State University researchers have secured new federal grants connected to specialty crop production. The grants are part of 29 awards totaling \$46 million announced by the U.S. Agriculture Department's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

Team honored (Reading Eagle 10/16). A team led by Jan Scholl, associate professor of agriculture and extension education in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences, was honored recently by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture during a ceremony in Washington. The team developed a national research database for studies related to 4-H and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. [Link](#)

UW-Madison leads national effort to improve quality, safety of processed potatoes (The Republic 10/17).

The University of Wisconsin-Madison will lead a national effort to improve the quality and safety of processed potatoes. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture at the U.S. Department of Agriculture says a \$3.7 million grant will support efforts to reduce a carcinogen in french fries and potato chips known as acrylamide (ah-KRIL'-ih-MEYED). [Link](#)

UW-Madison to Lead Effort to Improve Processed Potatoes (Wisconsin Ag Connection 10/17).

Researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison have been selected to lead a national, multi-institution effort to improve the quality of processed potatoes. According to the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, a \$3.7

million Specialty Crop Research Initiative grant has been awarded to the school to help support an effort to reduce the amount of acrylamide, which is a potential carcinogen commonly found in starchy foods cooked at high temperature. [Link](#)

OSU student receives scholarship (Corvallis Gazette Times 10/17). James Thomas of Corvallis was among six Oregon State University students who recently received U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture Multicultural Scholars Program scholarships. The scholarships provide recipients with up to four years of tuition and a paid internship and/or research experience. [Link](#)

MSU gets \$5 million in federal grants for specialty crop research (Michigan Live 10/17). Michigan State University has been issued federal grants totaling more than \$5 million to enhance research designed to boost specialty crop production in the United States. The grants are part of 29 awards, totaling \$46 million, from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Institutions in 19 states are receiving the grants as part of the Specialty Crop Research Initiative that will be used to develop and share science-based tools to address the needs of America's specialty crop industry. [Link](#)

US(FL): Grape researcher wins \$2.2 million grant (Fresh Plaza 10/17). University of Florida grape researcher Dennis Gray has been awarded a five-year, \$2.2 million specialty crop grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture to continue his work toward creating disease-resistant, seedless muscadine grape varieties. The NIFA-funded research study could produce big results for Florida's \$20 million-a-year grape industry. [Link](#)

Safer French Fries and Potato Chips (WHBL 1330 Radio News-WI 10/17). Potato chips and French fries could be safer to eat as the result of a new study at U-W Madison. The U-S-D-A has awarded a three-point-seven million dollar grant to see what happens when a carcinogen called acrylamide is reduced in potato-based foods. Scientists from Madison will join their counterparts in nine university and U-S-D-A labs to develop potatoes with less acrylamide. According to the U-W, the researchers will look for potatoes with certain levels of sugars and amino acids which produce the carcinogen when potatoes are fried in high temperatures. The labs will also try to find molecular markers to use in breeding safer varieties of potatoes. [Link](#)

Specialty Crop Grants (AgInfo 10/18). On Friday the USDA announced 29 grants across 19 states to develop and share science-based tools to address the needs of America's specialty crop industry. Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan made the announcement. [Link](#)

A big stink (The Cavalier Daily 10/18). The infestation of Halyomorpha halys, more commonly known as "stink bugs," has become a noticeable issue at the University. The pesky insects congregate around windows and lamps, causing inconveniences in classrooms, dorms and in living spaces both on and off Grounds. According The Baltimore Sun, 10 U.S. states have jointly submitted a \$22 million grant proposal to

the National Institute of Food and Agriculture for research aimed toward immediate and enduring solutions. [Link](#)

Cornell University researchers looking for more cold weather hardy grapes (Syracuse.com 10/18). Got Concord in the refrigerator, Pinot in the wine rack, or Thompson Seedless in the fruit bowl? These familiar grape varieties will be making room for the next generation of improved, cold-hardy grapes, with a boost from two grants totaling \$4.5 million, led by Cornell University grape breeder Bruce Reisch and senior extension associate Tim Martinson. Both grants were funded by the by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture Specialty Crop Research Initiative, which supports multi-institution, interdisciplinary research on crops including fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, and ornamentals. [Link](#)

USDA Funds \$17.61 Million In Northeast Specialty Crop Research (Farm Progress 10/18). Land-grant universities and colleges in 19 states received Specialty Crop Research Initiative grants totaling \$46 million. Research facilities in Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania were among them. In making the announcement, USDA Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan said "Specialty crops producers in the United States – as with all of American agriculture – are seeing sales surge both domestically and abroad as consumers search for high quality, 'Grown in America' fruits, vegetables and tree nuts." Specialty crops, as defined by law, are fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticultural and nursery crops, plus floriculture. These projects, she noted, will help provide specialty crops producers with the information and tools they need to successfully grow, process and market safe and high quality products. [Link](#)

3 MSU agriculture professors given more than \$5 million in grants (State News – MI 10/18). Three MSU researchers have secured separate grants totaling more than \$5 million to study specialty crops and plants in Michigan and across the country. Assistant professor of entomology Matt Grieshop, associate professor of zoology Catherine Lindell and associate professor of horticulture Ryan Warner now will be able to pursue separate research projects through funding secured as part of a nationwide distribution to colleges of about \$46 million in grants by the Department of Agriculture. Grieshop will use his \$2.5 million grant to study more efficient ways of caring for and protecting apples and cherries in orchards, while Lindell's \$2 million grant will explore ways to limit bird damage to various fruit crops, according to a release. [Link](#)

\$5 million in grants awarded to Michigan researchers studying organic fruit production, bird damage to fruits, and petunia production efficiencies (Michigan Live-MI 10/18). Southwest Michigan is the home of the state's fruit, vegetable and bedding plant production and three researchers from Michigan State University landed federal grants totaling more than \$5 million for research designed to boost specialty crop production in the United States. ... The grants are part of 29 awards, totaling \$46 million, from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Institutions in 19 states are receiving the grants as part of the Specialty

Crop Research Initiative that will be used to develop and share science-based tools to address the needs of America's specialty crop industry. [Link](#)

Developing Better Plant Containers (WOWT 10/18). Iowa State University has been awarded a grant by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to develop biorenewable and biodegradable containers for the specialty crop industry. The \$1.9 million grant will be used to develop bioplastic containers as an alternative to petroleum-based pots. USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture last week awarded 29 grants across 19 states to develop and share science-based tools to address the needs of America's specialty crop industry grants through its Specialty Crop Research Initiative. [Link](#)

New York state honey producers receive federal grant to help solve honey bee loss problem (Syracuse.com 10/18). The Empire State Honey Producers Association has received a federal grant to help New York beekeepers to stop the loss of honey bee colonies in the State. The three-year, \$59,000 grant will train beekeepers to not only prevent, diagnose, and treat honeybee maladies, but give them the tools to teach other, beginning beekeepers to recognize bee diseases. The grant is administered by the USDA-NIFA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, which provides funding to support training, education, outreach, and technical assistance initiatives for beginning farmers or ranchers. [Link](#)

Agriculture Chairwoman Stabenow Announces New Support for Michigan Fruit and Vegetable Sector (Political News 10/19). Senator Debbie Stabenow, Chairwoman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, announced U.S. Department of Agriculture efforts to partner with Michigan State University to conduct research that will help enhance the competitiveness of Michigan's fruit and vegetable industry. The efforts are administered by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). [Link](#)

USDA backs acrylamide reduction project for processed potatoes (Food Navigator USA 10/19). A new four-year project aiming to reduce acrylamide content in processed potatoes has received a \$3.7m Specialty Crop Research Initiative Grant from the US Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). [Link](#)

UC at forefront of specialty crop research (Western Farm Press 10/19). University of California researchers will receive more than \$6 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2011 Specialty Crop Block Grant program, which is intended to enhance agricultural markets, address environmental concerns, protect plant health, provide farmers with scientifically tested production techniques and increase food safety. [Link](#)

In search of new farmers (Western Farm Press 10/20). The Request for Application for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) is now available, and applications are due by Nov. 22, 2011. Projects will be awarded

in 2012 and performed between October 2012 and September 2013. Approximately \$19 million is expected to be available. [Link](#)

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