

NIFA in the News – Week of October 29, 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 29, 2012.

In the News

KickinKitchen.TV, is awarded \$450,000 for New Healthy Tween Educational Web Platform (Paramus Post 10/26). The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) awarded a \$450,000 Phase II Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant to KidsCOOK Productions. KidsCOOK Productions is a premier multimedia entertainment company specializing in the production of quality television and digital programming for children that supports obesity prevention. [Link](#)

U of M to study organic dairy profitability (AP/Post Bulletin 10/26). University of Minnesota researchers will collaborate with organic dairy farmers on a new study aimed at improving the dairies' profitability. The project will be headquartered at the university's West Central Research and Outreach Center at Morris. It brings farmers together with experts in animal science, entomology, agronomy and economics. A \$1.9 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture will help fund the four-year project. [Link](#)

Trees for Larimer, Homewood (Pittsburgh Post Gazette 10/26). The greening of Larimer continues tomorrow with the planting of seven trees on Larimer Avenue between Mayflower and Carver. This planting is one of two enabled with a \$5,000 grant from The Alliance for Community Trees, a national non-profit, to Tree Pittsburgh. The Alliance for Community Trees' People's Garden Grant Program is a national initiative this year "to explore and deepen the connection between trees and urban agriculture," Tree Pittsburgh wrote in a notice. "With support from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, ACTrees has provided funding to 30 communities in 21 states to plant trees that produce fruit and nuts or provide shelter to community gardens." [Link](#)

Blumenthal, UConn officials kick off "CT Moves IM" (Stamford Plus 10/26). Friday at Roger Sherman Elementary School in Meriden, Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) and officials from the University of Connecticut kicked off the Connecticut Fitness and Nutrition Clubs In Motion or "CT Moves IM," a National Institute of Food and Agriculture project that will aim to lower childhood obesity in children ages 9 to 14 by addressing health and wellness issues in 4-H afterschool clubs. Recently,

the project received a five-year \$2.5 million Agriculture and Food Research Initiative Competitive Grant. Such grants are awarded by the U.S. Department Agriculture.

[Link](#)

Water Usage Grant (AgInfo.net 10/30). Farmers and ranchers in Washington state have been dealing with changing weather patterns over the last several years that have affected the way they run their operations. Water availability in the Columbia River Basin is a major concern needing to be addressed as a result of such changes. A recent USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture \$1.5 million grant to WSU will go a long way in helping researchers learn how water systems and associated stakeholders will adapt to changes in climate and water availability. [Link](#)

Water modeling seeks farmers' input (Capital Press 10/30). Researchers are looking for water users to help them as they model the major river systems in the Columbia Basin. Washington State University recently received a \$1.4 million grant from USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture to develop a computer model of water movement, quality and movement of nutrients like nitrogen, phosphorus and carbon in the Columbia River Basin. [Link](#)

Do Fuel Crops Pay? Farmers Get A Way To Know (Earth Techling 10/31). Your honor, we plead guilty to the charge of never having viewed ag-based biofuels from the perspective of the farmer, who, it is clear to us now, having looked at the new University of Illinois feedstock cost and profitability calculator, faces a complex question in deciding whether to grow for food or fuel, and on what land to grow. A U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant funded the development of the feedstocks calculator – and if there's adequate interest, Khanna said her team could try to create a drop-down menu that can be used by farmers in all states. [Link](#)

Calculator helps farmers find cost of switching to biomass crops (Ethanol Producer Magazine 11/2). Along with the growing interest in biomass energy crops as renewable alternatives to fossil fuels comes a growing list of questions from corn and soybean farmers about what it will cost them to switch. University of Illinois agricultural economist Madhu Khanna developed a customizable online calculator to eliminate some of the guesswork and help farmers make the decision. The production of the biomass feedstocks calculator was funded by a USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant. If there is enough interest, Khanna said her team will attempt to add to the interface and create a drop-down menu that can be used by farmers in all states. [Link](#)

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