

## NIFA in the News – Week of March 21, 2011

Curious as to what happens to all the news releases you see in the [NIFA newsroom](#)? Here's the weekly summary of NIFA in the news for the week of March 21, 2011.

### In the News

**Temple obesity center wins \$3.7 million U.S. grant (Philadelphia Business Journal 3/14).**

Temple University said Monday that its Center for Obesity Research and Education has gotten a five-year \$3.7 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture to fund a project aimed at preventing obesity among low-income pre-schoolers. [Link](#)

**Virginia Tech shares in forestry grant (Delta Farm Press 3/16).** The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) has awarded a consortium of land-grant institutions in the South, which includes Virginia Tech, a Coordinated Agricultural Grant to study the effects of climate change on southern pine forests. [Link](#)

**A few chores to get a jump-start on gardening season (The Washington Post 3/18).** If late winter was an indicator, we are headed for a bumper crop of flowers this spring. This parade of flowering plants will continue because spring officially begins tomorrow. Here are some suggestions for appropriate spring gardening tasks . . . Call your county or state Cooperative Extension Service or check the National Institute of Food and Agriculture or the University of Maryland's Home and Garden Information Center. [Link](#)

**USDA awards food safety grant (The Packer 3/20).** In an attempt to reduce the number of foodborne illnesses caused by E. coli, the U.S. Department of Agriculture awarded Michigan State University a \$2.5 million research grant to study shedding, or the release of shiga toxin-producing E. coli from the digestive tracts of cattle. [Link](#)

**USDA Funds Climate Change Research For \$60 Million (Huffington Post 3/21).** The federal government is investing \$60 million in three major studies on the effects of climate change on crops and forests to help ensure farmers and foresters can continue producing food and timber while trying to limit the impact of a changing environment. Shifting weather patterns already have had a big effect on U.S. agriculture, and the country needs to prepare for even greater changes, said Roger Beachy, director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, an arm of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. [Link](#)

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**Congressional extension and Ag funds impact (Natural Resources Report 3/21).** The federal government will be funded until April 8 under a new continuing resolution finalized this week. The agreed upon amount of cuts to avoid a government shutdown for three weeks was \$6 billion. Of that total, \$358 million came from agricultural research funds, including \$122 million from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture's research and education mission. [Link](#)

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**Enter the USDA, to Rescue Americans From... Something (American Thinker 3/22).** The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently announced an initiative of a type which has never succeeded in the history of civilization: centralized government planning. Espousing the unsubstantiated belief that CO2-induced "climate change" is already reducing food and lumber crop yields, the USDA now claims the ability to use central planning to guide farmers and foresters through problems stemming from said climate change. According to Roger Beachy, head of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) within the USDA, regionally variable climate change will necessitate different crop growing adaptation strategies. [Link](#)

**Ready-to-eat meat contains few cancerous compounds (Science Blog 3/22).** If given the choice between eating a hot dog or enjoying some rotisserie chicken, consider the hot dog. That's because hot dogs, as well as pepperoni and deli meats, are relatively free of carcinogenic compounds, according to Kansas State University research. But it's a not-so-happy ending for bacon and rotisserie chicken — especially chicken skin — because both have higher levels of cancerous material. Smith's research was supported by the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service with the USDA, the American Meat Institute Foundation and the National Pork Board Checkoff. [Link](#)

**U.S. Invests \$3.7 Million To Prevent Obesity Among Low Income Preschoolers (Gov Monitor 3/22).** Agriculture Secretary Vilsack has announced a grant to Temple University to prevent obesity among low-income pre-schoolers by teaching mothers simple strategies to promote healthy food choices and portion sizes to their children. Roger Beachy, Director of USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) unveiled the grant on behalf of Secretary Vilsack at an event at Temple University this morning. [Link](#)

**USDA Awards \$60 Million for Climate Change Research (Green Chip Stocks 3/22).** Studies focusing on the effects of climate change on agriculture will get a big boost this year. The USDA has announced a rather sizeable chunk of funding to aid in research of how farmers and foresters can continue crop and timber production amidst environmental and climate changes. Roger Beachy is director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, a branch of the USDA. Beachy points out the importance of this kind of research, explaining climate change is not stagnant, and will affect various areas of the United States in different ways. [Link](#)

**Temple, Children's tackle child obesity (Philadelphia Tribune 3/22).** Temple's Center for Obesity Research and Education (CORE) has been awarded a five-year \$3.7 million grant to study the link between parenting strategies and childhood obesity. The study is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture and will consist of three parts. Temple will be collaborating with researchers from Virginia Tech for the study. [Link](#)

**Temple University Gets Fed Grant To Fight Obesity In Poor Kids (CBS 3/22).** Temple University's Center for Obesity Research and Education is digesting a new federal grant to help mothers make better food choices for their children. The \$3.7-million grant is aimed at preventing obesity among low-income preschoolers. [Link](#)

**Temple studies obesity prevention and parenting (WHYY Newsworks 3/23).** Researchers at

Temple University are exploring the influence of parenting on childhood obesity. Scientists don't really know if permissive parenting makes kids fat, or if mean mommies have slimmer kids, but emerging research suggests that authoritative parents may be raising kids who have better eating habits and a healthier weight. [Link](#)

**Rust-Resistant Switchgrass Is Research Goal (Hay and Forage Grower 3/23).** A Virginia Tech horticulturalist has received a \$1 million grant from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture to develop rust-resistant switchgrass varieties. [Link](#)

**Researching for Healthy Children (All Ag News 3/23).** USDA has released a grant to Temple University to prevent obesity among low-income pre-schoolers by teaching mothers simple strategies to promote healthy food choices and portion sizes to their children. Roger Beachy, Director of USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, said – NIFA supports sound scientific research that will reverse the trend of rising obesity rates and help children and their families adopt healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime. [Link](#)

**Stink bug population spreading across USA (USA Today 3/24).** Stink bugs, the smelly scourge of the mid-Atlantic, are hitch-hiking and gliding their way across the country. USDA officials "take this pest seriously and are hard at work trying to understand effective ways to control it and mitigate its effect," USDA spokeswoman Jennifer Martin says. Two USDA agencies — the National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the Agricultural Research Service — fund projects at universities and research centers to study how to control and combat stink bugs. Funding for the USDA's stink bug research in fiscal year 2010 totals nearly \$1.09 million, Martin says. [Link](#)

**Research into switchgrass rust resistance gene funded (Biomass Magazine 3/24).** An assistant professor of horticulture at Virginia Tech has been awarded a \$1 million grant from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture to develop and deploy rust fungus resistant genes and monitor the pathogen in switchgrass. It's the second monetary award his research into rust-resistance has earned him. [Link](#)

**Four-year childhood obesity prevention study will focus on stress eating (MLive 3/24).** Community Action Agency in Jackson will soon participate in a four-year childhood obesity prevention study conducted by University of Michigan and Michigan State University researchers. The University of Michigan was recently awarded a \$4.9 million grant by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture for research and work aimed at reducing childhood obesity among Head Start preschoolers in Michigan. [Link](#)

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