

NIFA in the News – Week of March 28, 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 28, 2011.

In the News

Texas AgriLife Research genetics team to study effects of climate change on forests (North Texas e-News 3/27). Scientists from Texas AgriLife Research, the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the department of ecosystem science and management at Texas A&M University are part of a \$20 million federal grant to study the effects of climate change on agricultural production. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture has awarded three Coordinated Agriculture Projects to study the effects of climate change on agriculture and forest production. [Link](#)

Agricultural laboratory could close after 75 years (Coshocton Tribune 3/27). Concerns about drinking water contaminants, improved food production and safe fishing and swimming conditions all are issues addressed through research at the U.S. Department of Agriculture North Appalachian Experimental Watershed (NAEW). However, the USDA Agricultural Research Service fiscal year 2012 budget proposes closing it and nine other research stations around the country after Oct. 1. In 2011, the NAEW became part of one of the largest USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture projects ever awarded that will investigate adaptation and mitigation of corn-production systems because of changes in climate. [Link](#)

Virginia Tech to Improve Soy Production & Sustainability (Wisconsin Ag Connection 3/29). USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture announced a grant to Virginia Tech to address global food security concerns through improved soybean production. [Link](#)

Obesity Center receives \$3.7 million grant (Temple News 3/29). The Center for Obesity Research and Education recently received a five-year, \$3.7 million grant from the United States Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture to fund a project that will study nutrition habits and influences on preschool-aged children. [Link](#)

Northwestern Illinois Agricultural Research and Demonstration Center in Monmouth hosting celebration Thursday (Review Atlas 3/29). Each year, about 50 different projects are conducted by up to 12 campus-based project leaders and the center superintendent. Subject matter areas involved in these projects include soil chemistry and fertility, soil management, crop production, weed science, entomology, plant pathology, pest management and

environmental quality. For example, Nafziger will be starting research at Monmouth this spring for a recently announced \$20 million USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant awarded to nine land-grant universities and two USDA Agricultural Research Service institutions. [Link](#)

USDA awards grant for multi-state soybean disease project (Drovers 3/29). USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture has awarded a grant to create new disease management technologies to improve the sustainability of soybean production. Virginia Bioinformatics Institute and Virginia Tech's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences are the lead institutions for the \$9.28 million grant. [Link](#)

Lake Nebagamon youth to attend national 4-H conference (Superior Telegram 3/30). Robert Blair of Lake Nebagamon was selected as one of six youth delegates from Wisconsin to participate in the National 4-H Conference in Washington, D.C., April 2-7. As the sponsor for this conference, the National 4-H Headquarters — located at the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture — promotes positive youth development, facilitate learning, and engages youth in the work of the Land-Grant Universities and USDA to enhance their quality of life. [Link](#)

UCR: \$9 million federal grant for plant study (The Press-Enterprise – CA 3/30) UC Riverside plant pathologist Howard Judelson has been awarded a \$9 million federal grant -- one of the largest ever given to the university -- to spend five years studying one of the world's most costly agricultural diseases. *Phytophthora infestans* is a fungus-like microbe responsible for late blight, a disease that attacks potato and tomato crops and is estimated to cause \$7 billion worth of crop losses annually. The money from the U.S. Department of Agriculture is the third-largest single grant the university has received in the past 10 years, surpassed only by grants of \$12 million and \$9.2 million. It's also one of the larger grants handed out by the USDA, which prompted the agency's undersecretary for research, education and economics, Cathie Wotekito visit the campus Wednesday to announce the award. [Link](#)

UC Riverside professor receives grant to study plant pathogen (Southwest Riverside News Network 3/30) During a visit today from a U.S. Department of Agriculture official, a UC Riverside professor was formally awarded a \$9 million federal grant for research into ways of combating a potato-and tomato-killing microbe. Professor Howard Judelson, who studies plant pathology, will lead a five-year project to identify how to better protect crops from "late blight," a disease that can rot tomatoes and potatoes on the vine. Cathie Woteki, USDA Undersecretary for Research, Education and Economics, made the grant official during a stop at the UCR campus. "More than 40 percent of current crop production among the top 10 food crops is lost to pests and diseases annually, and that is a huge loss for farmers," Woteki said. "USDA is funding this project to help agricultural producers win the future by ensuring our country can keep producing the food needed to meet rising demand in a sustainable way." Judelson described late blight as a "global problem" with devastating consequences. The plant pathogen is blamed for Ireland's potato famine, which triggered an exodus from that country into the United States in the mid 1800s. [Link](#)

Illinois partners in grant to study soybean pathogens (Drovers 3/31). The Department of Crop Sciences in the University of Illinois College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) is part of a multidisciplinary team representing 18 institutions

that has been awarded a \$9.28 million grant from the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. This team, led by scientists at the Virginia Bioinformatics Institute and Virginia Tech's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, is focused on developing new disease management technologies to improve the sustainability of soybean production. [Link](#)
