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NIFA in the News – Week of August 8, 2011

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In the News

N.C. State wins $25M grant (WGNC-NC 8/3). Researchers at NCSU have won a $25 million grant. Thanks to a $25 million grant, North Carolina State University will study ways to make food safer by attempting to eliminate the most common cause of food-borne disease. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, or NIFA, awarded N.C. State the grant to study human noroviruses across the food supply chain in hopes of learning enough to develop effective control measures and reduce the number of virus-caused food-borne illnesses. Link

Virginia Tech, other schools work to boost Appalachian food access (WSLS-VA 8/3). Agriculture officials say many low-income residents of southern Appalachia aren't getting enough fresh, healthy, affordable food, and researchers are working with community groups to find ways to solve that problem. Virginia Tech's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, along with experts from North Carolina State and West Virginia universities, are teaming up in the effort. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture is funding the three-year, $2 million initiative. The national program backs projects that find ways to help disadvantaged urban and rural residents establish sustainable food systems. Link

USDA Funds Norovirus Study (Food Safety News 8/4). North Carolina State University (NCSU) has received a $25 million federal grant to study how human noroviruses are transmitted and survive in food, with a goal of finding better ways to control them and reduce the number of foodborne illnesses they cause. The grant was announced Wednesday by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack at the annual conference of the International Association for Food Protection in Milwaukee. Human noroviruses cause more than 21 million illnesses each year, and more than half of all foodborne disease outbreaks are due to noroviruses… NCSU food science professor Lee-Ann Jaykus will lead the team of researchers to establish the USDA-NIFA Food Virology Collaborative. In addition to NCSU, the team will include scientists at Clemson University, Baylor College of Medicine, Emory University and the National Foundation for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention -- all together, more

than 30 collaborators from across academia, industry and government. Link

Simple strategies to combat obesity (Philly-PA 8/4). Remember that old saying about leading a horse to water? The bottom line of course is that you can't *make* him drink. That wisdom seems to hold true, too, when it comes to preventing obesity and its serious medical consequences. You can create greater access to fresh fruits and vegetables - by building supermarkets in food deserts, changing the offerings at corner stores, adding more farmers' markets and subsidizing costs there, offering cooking demonstrations, and distributing recipes. But can you really influence what goes on behind the kitchen door? Jennifer Orlet Fisher of Temple University and a colleague from Virginia Tech will spend $3.7 million over the next five years answering that question. Fisher, who heads the Family Eating Lab at the Center for Obesity Research and Education at Temple University, and Elena Serrano of Virginia Tech received a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture in March and are poised to recruit participants for their study. Link

USDA Grants $25M for Norovirus Research (Food Product Design 8/5). North Carolina State University (NCSU) received a $25 million grant from USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) to study human noroviruses across the food supply chain. The researchers will investigate and design effective norovirus control measures that will reduce the number of virus-caused foodborne illnesses. Link

Farms of the future:Producing bio-oil, biochar from farmers' crops (Brookings Register 8/5). A major new study by South Dakota State University researchers working with a U.S. Department of Agriculture colleague explores how to get the most from such a production system. The USDA is funding the project with a $1 million grant – $200,000 annually for the next five years – to help scientists design a feedstock production system for optimum energy production of "bio-oil." The project will also explore the possible ecological benefits from the use of biochar. The grant was selected by the USDA's competitive grants program called AFRI, or the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative. Link

N.C. State Univ. receives $25 M extend to stop norovirus (Food Science Chef 8/9). North Carolina State University will use a $25 million extend from a U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) to strengthen food reserve by study tellurian noroviruses opposite a food supply sequence in an bid to pattern effective control measures and revoke a series of virus-caused foodborne illnesses. Link

Researchers Develop Revolutionary Biobased Resins From Crop Materials (Newswise 8/10). Several crops produced in the U.S. could play a significant role in biobased resins and coatings recently developed by researchers at North Dakota State University, Fargo. Scientists at NDSU have developed biobased resins that may prove to be a "game changer" in coatings and resin technology. The NDSU researchers have developed a family of resins from renewable raw materials, creating resins that

eliminate hazardous components such as formaldehyde and bisphenol-A. Funding for the biobased coatings research was provided by the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service under grant number 2007-38202-18597. Link

Secretary of Agriculture Announces $25 Million Norovirus Collaborative Grant (Quality Assurance and Food Safety Magazine 8/11). More than 30 institutions were awarded in a $25 million collaborative grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) to strengthen food safety by studying human noroviruses across the food supply chain. The grant was awarded in an effort to design effective control measures and reduce the number of virus-caused foodborne illnesses. Link

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